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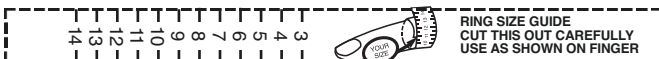
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Nine-year-old Myles Eckert, whose father lost his life in Iraq, was recognized by Sons of The American Legion's Detachment of Ohio for "paying it forward" to a member of the Ohio Air National Guard in a heart-tugging moment aired by CBS Evening News in February. *By Cameran Richardson* Photo by Lucas Carter

70 YEARS AFTER D-DAY

American Legion National Commander Dan Dellinger and American Legion Auxiliary President Nancy Brown-Park were among tens of thousands from around the world who visited northwestern France in June to honor those who fought in the 1944 Allied invasion of Europe, which led to victory in World War II. "We all owe our freedom to those who answered the call," Dellinger said after placing a memorial wreath under the statue "Spirit of American Youth Rising from the Waves" at the Normandy American Cemetery. "It's inspiring to come to this part of the world and see how many local people truly understand that debt and appreciate it. It is inspiring, and it is humbling."

Visit www.legion.org/honor to see stories and photos. Photo by Jeff Stoffer

The American Legion Magazine, a leader among national general-interest publications, is published monthly by The American Legion for its 2.3 million members. These wartime veterans, working through 14,000 community-level posts, dedicate themselves to God and Country and traditional American values; strong national security; adequate and compassionate care for veterans, their widows and orphans; community service; and the wholesome development of our nation's youth.

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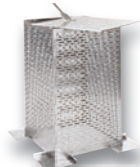
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'A Question of Power'

I think the dynamic of expanding presidential power is best illustrated by a single newscast from about 20 years ago. There were two stories: the first was that U.S. children watched more TV than did children in any other country, and the second reported a study in which U.S. children finished behind most other countries in measures of academic performance. The latter was accompanied by sound bites of people demanding to know what the president was going to do about it. In the immortal words of Pogo, "We have met the enemy and he is us."

— Mike Karsted, Beaverton, Ore.

Regarding the articles by Jonathan Turley and William Howell, I am well aware of the necessity of government, since chaos is the alternative. Nevertheless, I come down hard on the side of limited power. Each of us has some responsibility for his or her conduct. Trying to push more and more of it onto government ends up creating a population of yes people.

— Stuart Lyons, St. Johns, Ariz.

William Howell calls for nothing less than the complete destruction of our constitutional system. He says the incumbent president has been correctly violating his oath of office because Article II of the Constitution does not give the president sufficient powers to act. The founding fathers knew what they were doing. They feared a strong president.

Even if Howell is right, there is a procedure for changing the Constitution. He has the right to argue for those changes. But the president does not have the right to ignore his oath of office and usurp powers reserved to Congress or the people.

To ignore the Constitution as it is written would destroy the essence of America; we are a nation of laws, not of unconstrained rulers.

— Nelson Easterling, Tallahassee, Fla.

I love my country, yet as a combat veteran I know that opinions change when we wear the shoes of others. There are those, like Cliven Bundy or Los Angeles Clippers owner Donald Sterling, who will never change because of their beliefs and the way they were brought up. The president has Article II of the Constitution, and some cannot accept the fact that our president who is of color is using this article to include everyone. I believe in progress.

— Arthur Matthews, Piscataway, N.J.

Jonathan Turley says that many Americans misunderstand the separation of powers "as simply a division of authority between three branches of government." What's new? A majority of Americans don't vote, nor do they care to. I used to work for a local elected official. Constituents couldn't even get his title right, calling him a senator, assemblyman, congressman. People don't care until they're forced to.

— Jeremy Warneke, Bronx, N.Y.

The commentary on the powers of the presidency bypasses the real problem. Why isn't the focus on the cause of this gridlock? The framers had a deep understanding of human nature that is absent today.



They recognized that man's self-serving instincts would overwhelm the rights of any minority. They purposefully established a republic in which the legislative process was left to elected representatives.

The framers expected that the self-serving interests of members of Congress would have them return to their chosen careers after a short period of service. But for many, being a legislator was more lucrative and thus a career goal. This led to gerrymandered districts, special congressional powers based on longevity, primary elections with rules that exclude independent voters and favor incumbents, and the need for incumbents to favor wealthy constituents and corporations in return for re-election contributions.

These self-serving practices are neither specified nor implied in the Constitution. They need to be replaced by rules that provide a level playing field for new, unencumbered candidates.

— Marlin E. Reinhart, Lehighton, Pa.

The thrust of William Howell's argument seemed to be that (1) citizens demand that presidents solve all of their problems; (2) Congress is incapable of moving in unison to address the citizens' demands, so presidents must act, regardless of any constitutional limitations against such action; and (3) the Constitution is an outdated document created for a nation of pig farmers, so we shouldn't be too concerned with adhering to its principles.

As to the first issue, Howell ignores the fact that presidents

can simply tell the citizens they should look foremost to their own communities and local governments for solutions to their problems. Catering to unreasonable expectations and abusing the separation-of-powers doctrine for political gain is not an act of leadership to be lauded as a necessary evil.

Regarding stalemates in Congress, the framers fully intended for the passage of legislation to be difficult in order to prevent the whims of the day from guiding the country down disastrous paths. The last time Congress walked in lockstep, it sent the country to war in Iraq and passed the Patriot Act. What could possibly go wrong if only one individual holds the power to declare war and decide if a citizen is an enemy of the country and therefore deserving of surveillance, indefinite detainment or death?

Finally, there is the notion that the Constitution should be ignored simply because it was created in an earlier era. However, the form of government the framers created was based on a careful study of how men had governed or had been governed across many centuries and diverse civilizations, and was designed to endure the passions, both good and evil, which motivate humankind.

Howell's argument amounts to nothing more than encouragement for those who would prefer to look the other way and do nothing rather than fight to preserve their right to govern themselves.

— Jay R. Boltin, Baton Rouge, La.

'Back in the USSR'

Alan Dowd hit the nail on the head about Vladimir Putin (June), particularly when he said that Putin is playing chess and winning. If you want to win at chess, you have to control the center of the board; Putin is doing that in Ukraine. You trade your pawns for your opponent's major pieces; he is doing that with his soldiers. Chess in Russia is like baseball here.

— Donald W. Killmeyer, Pittsburgh

Alan Dowd says Putin has pulled Russia away from the West, away from globalization and back toward autarky. I had to look that word up; it means self-sufficiency and independence. Maybe Dowd can explain why that's a bad thing.

Putin is not America's greatest problem. Our biggest problem is globalization, politicians who don't put America first, banking, and people who write articles twisting what is really going on in the world.

— Milton Robinson, Coatesville, Pa.

'The Meaning of Normandy'

As an old veteran of 86, I have read many stories in this magazine that have touched me emotionally. But Keith Nightingale's article (June) brought a flood of tears to my eyes like no other story I have ever read. I wish every child in America could read about how the people in this tiny French village take time every June 6 to remember seven American soldiers who died there. The French people have not forgotten.

— Clarence A. Sears, Jacksonville, Fla.

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If it seems we have been here before, we have. Compassionate, timely care for veterans has been a challenge for our government since the Revolutionary War. The most important development in this journey came immediately after The American Legion was founded in 1919. Adequate care for veterans who returned home changed by war was then, and remains today, the essential purpose of our organization.

After World War I, the mix of federal bureaus and agencies assigned to serve veterans was at best dysfunctional. At worst, it was corrupt. One early director of the Veterans Bureau, an ineffective predecessor to the Veterans Administration, was sent to prison after using government funds to stockpile and resell hospital supplies, including 100 years' worth of floor wax, on the black market. Mentally ill veterans were warehoused in jails, asylums and abandoned hotels, their conditions undiagnosed let alone treated. Disabled, blinded, poisoned and diseased veterans became the burdens of their families, not of our nation.

The American Legion spent a decade fighting to repair the problem, making and winning the case for just one federal authority to deliver care and earned benefits to veterans and their families. It was both a moral imperative and an expression of gratitude on behalf of a nation that should never take freedom for granted. VA would be that authority.

Since 1930, VA has withstood numerous shifts in health-care delivery, patient demand, politics, technology, budgets and organizational overhauls, including its rise to Cabinet status in 1989. As the leading voice of veterans who use VA services, the Legion has been in the thick of every battle, from soaring demand after World War II to the embarrassing need to improve quality, cleanliness and efficiency in the 1990s.

Over the past decade, VA has evolved to become, as author Phillip Longman wrote in his 2007 book comparing it against all other sectors, "the best care anywhere." The caregivers, The American Legion and, yes, even our government can be proud that the VA system outperforms all others in patient satisfaction and quality.

When I called for the resignations of VA Secretary Eric Shinseki and his two top undersecretaries in May, I did not call for the resignation of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Timely access to VA's high-quality care has been an unsolved problem for too long. When whistle-blowers revealed secret lists and intentional lies – and that executives received bonuses based on falsified appointment records while veterans were dying in line – it was not time for more study. It was time for change. That's happening now because The American Legion believes VA is a system worth saving.

Amid all this has emerged a familiar outcry to collapse the system, give veterans vouchers and let them go to any facility that will take them. Such an argument suggests that veterans do not deserve the specialized, quality care VA provides. Moreover, it suggests a willingness to surrender rather than solve a problem. Thankfully, those of us who served in uniform, often against deadly odds, do not give up so easily.




National Commander
Daniel M. Dellinger

MEMORANDA

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All issues of *The American Legion Weekly* (July 1919-June 1926) are now available in The American Legion Digital Archive. Issues of *The American Legion Magazine* from January 2003 to December 2011 are available as well. Progress continues on making available all past issues of Legion publications.

 archive.legion.org

CONVENTION COVERAGE

Several major events of the 96th National Convention in Charlotte – the Color Guard contest, the Patriotic Memorial Service and gavel-to-gavel floor coverage – will be streamed live online.

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FOUNDING FATHERS

During Spring Meetings in Indianapolis, the Legion's National Executive Committee approved an alliance with the Founding Fathers Brewing Co., a new U.S.-owned company that brews premium lagers. Founding Fathers will support American military families with half of net royalties from sales through American Legion posts, and will have a presence at the 96th National Convention in Charlotte this month. The company is in the process of rolling out availability to all states.

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“When you were a civilian, you had to learn how to be (in the military). You were trained. Now it’s exactly the opposite. Now you have to be trained to be a civilian.”

BOB MASTRONICOLA

As director of veterans education and transition support at Lake Erie College in Ohio, Bob Mastronicola spends his days helping young veterans navigate college and, eventually, graduation. As 9th District commander for The American Legion’s Department of Ohio, he works hard to see that the Legion actively supports this same group.

Thus, starting an American Legion post at Lake Erie College made sense to the Army retiree.

“These are family members our veterans here can go to when they graduate and move out,” says Mastronicola of the Legion’s reach and influence. “The positive is that we’re seeing more interaction between our campus veterans and the veterans on the outside. For example, we’re our own community (on campus) ... but in going to district conferences and county conferences and state conferences, we’re now getting veterans here associating with veterans from other posts. It’s expanding their networking capabilities to land and get careers when they finish up here at the school.”

Mastronicola says he’s quite familiar with the difficulties of moving from a structured military lifestyle to the more laid-back atmosphere of college life. “A lot of the issues with these veterans, I can relate,” he says. “I think that helps veterans out. They can see it’s a survivable task: going to college and graduating.”

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Watch an interview with Bob Mastronicola online:


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Photo by Lucas Carter

30 THE AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE • WINTER 2014

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"I love this computer! It is easy to read and to use! I get photo updates from my children and grandchildren all the time."

– Janet F.

Have you ever said to yourself "I'd love to get a computer, if only I could figure out how to use it." Well, you're not alone. Computers were supposed to make our lives simpler, but they've gotten so complicated that they are not worth the trouble. With all of the "pointing and clicking" and "dragging and dropping" you're lucky if you can figure out where you are. Plus, you are constantly worrying about viruses and freeze-ups. If this sounds familiar, we have great news for you. There is finally a computer that's designed for simplicity and ease of use. It's the WOW Computer, and it was designed with you in mind. This computer is easy-to-use, worry-free and literally puts the world at your

fingertips. From the moment you open the box, you'll realize how different the WOW Computer is. The components are all connected; all you do is plug it into an outlet and your high-speed Internet connection. Then you'll see the screen – it's now 22 inches. This is a completely new touch screen system, without the cluttered look of the normal computer screen. The "buttons" on the screen are easy to see and easy to understand. All you do is touch one of them, from the Web, Email, Calendar to Games—you name it... and a new screen opens up. It's so easy to use you won't have to ask your children or grandchildren for help. Until now the very people who could benefit most from E-mail and the Internet are the ones that have had the hardest time accessing it. Now, thanks to the WOW Computer, countless older Americans are discovering the wonderful world of the Internet every day. Isn't it time

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Select committee on Benghazi



SUPPORT

Rep. Martha Roby, R-Ala.

■ Roby is a member of the Benghazi committee and served as chairman of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations.

The terrorist attack in Benghazi, Libya, was a terrible tragedy, and we still mourn the four Americans who were brutally murdered that day. Many people ask why further investigation is needed after previous inquiries into the matter.

The select committee was formed because there are still questions about the security situation leading up to the attack, our response during it, and the administration's various public explanations in the aftermath.

Recently we learned that the White House withheld important Benghazi documents from congressional investigators. Congress has a constitutional responsibility to seek answers on behalf of the American people about the executive branch's activities, and our goal is to bring every relevant fact to light.

Another reason for the select committee is that the multi-jurisdictional nature of the issue makes it difficult to investigate across the existing committee structure. There are many layers to the story, involving our intelligence community, the State Department, our military and, of course, the White House. While other committees have made inquiries in those areas, no group has had the authority to investigate all aspects of the events at the same time. A select committee with broad jurisdiction will produce a clearer, more complete picture.

Lingering questions about the Benghazi attack, along with continued White House obstruction and the narrow scope of existing House committees, compel us to form this select committee and continue the search for truth.

However, politics will have no place in this process. Facts aren't Republican or Democratic. Facts are stubbornly impartial, and we are committed to pursuing them wherever they lead.



OPPOSE

Rep. Steven Horsford, D-Nev.

■ Horsford is a member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

The events of Sept. 11, 2012, were tragic. As members of Congress, we have an obligation to our country and the families of those killed at Benghazi to prevent such attacks from happening again. Unfortunately, the Republican obsession

with Benghazi is not about providing closure, moving forward or improving security. For the House GOP, it is a tragedy ripe for manufactured controversy. That's the purpose of the newly created select committee: not to get to the

truth, but to fan partisan flames.

Thus far, there have been eight reviews conducted, 25,000 documents produced and millions of taxpayer dollars spent on hearings.

Arguably the most comprehensive investigation was led by former U.S. ambassador Thomas Pickering. He conducted the Accountability Review Board investigation for the State Department and provided recommendations to improve security overseas. Our focus should be on implementing those recommendations.

For those who believe the truth is clouded despite exhaustive investigations, the select committee is not truth-seeking. It provides its chairman a unilateral authority to issue subpoenas that has been previously abused, no guaranteed access to witnesses for Democrats, and no guaranteed access to records or transcripts.

During the debate, Rep. Louise Slaughter, D-N.Y., offered an amendment to ensure the select committee operates fairly. It was rejected, along with any chance that the committee would serve a legitimate purpose. As a member of the Oversight Committee, I have seen where lopsided investigations end up: a political circus fueled by incomplete information.

THE HEART OF THE ISSUE

The House has formed a select committee to investigate and answer questions about the Sept. 11, 2012, terror attack that killed four Americans in Libya. Democrats say the review is unnecessary and partisan.

CONTACT YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS

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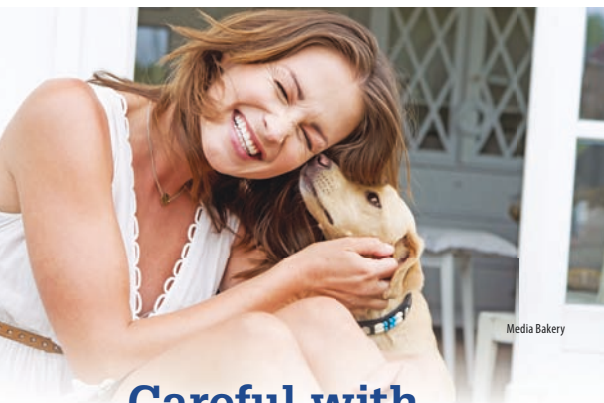
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Media Bakery

Shake the handshake habit

The *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* has called for the eventual phasing out of the universal handshake in health-care facilities. Citing the possibilities of transmitting everything from the common cold to *C. difficile*, it recommends alternative, noncontact greetings such as a wave, a hand over the heart or – if contact is really necessary – perhaps a fist bump.



Media Bakery

Careful with pooch's smooches

We've heard it a million times, and some of us may even believe it: "Dogs' mouths are actually cleaner than humans'."

Julie Torruellas-Garcia, a microbiologist at Nova Southeastern University, says that's just not true.

In a recent report from CBS' Miami affiliate, lab-tested saliva samples from dogs proved to be anything but clean. One culture dish "had so many bacteria mixed together that it was difficult to test," Torruellas-Garcia says. The cultures revealed evidence of *Neisseria*, a bacteria linked to STDs, pneumonia and plaque.

Really, it should be common sense, she adds: "Think about where a dog tends to lick."

Living Well is designed to provide general information. It is not intended to be, nor is it, medical advice. Readers should consult their physicians when they have health problems.



Media Bakery

WHEN FOOD IS THE ENEMY

BY MICHELLE GIBEAULT TRAUB

Millions of Americans suffer, often in silence, from digestive distress. Bloating, gas, heartburn, constipation and diarrhea are common complaints, causing many to resign themselves to a life of discomfort. But that doesn't have to be the case. There are simple solutions to digestive woes that can begin as soon as your next meal.

Slow down. Many of us eat on the go, which is cause for trouble. Digestion is an intricate process. The digestive tract is approximately 30 feet long, and it can take food more than two days to make that journey. When the body is rushed or under stress, the nervous system diverts blood flow from the digestive tract, making it harder for digestion to occur. An easy remedy is to simply slow down and take a few deep breaths before a meal. Deep breathing helps the body relax while enabling the brain to register the aromas of the food. Those aromas alert the stomach to produce digestive juices. Making mealtime special – say, with candles and soft music – can encourage the relaxed state that is best for digestion.

Chew thoroughly. The stomach and intestines often get the spotlight when discussing digestion. But we forget that the mouth does much of the hard work. Our teeth grind each bite of food into small pieces, mixing them with enzymes to kick-start nutrient breakdown. Rushing the process can lead to bloating and gas, as air is more likely to be introduced. A small study determined that when people doubled the number of chews they made, they ate 15 percent less food.

Know thine enemy. Since we tend to be in such a hurry when eating, we may not even realize that certain foods are the cause of our pain and discomfort. Some of the usual suspects include carbonated beverages, coffee, alcohol, fatty or fried foods, onions, and spicy or acidic foods such as chili peppers, chocolate or citrus fruits. Artificial sweeteners (sugar alcohols) can also cause gas and bloating when consumed in excess. Watch for these in sugar-free candies and gums; they have names ending in "ol" (i.e., sorbitol, xylitol). In addition, many people have intolerances or sensitivities to common ingredients such as gluten (wheat), dairy, corn, sugar and soy. The best way to know for sure how a food or ingredient is affecting you is to keep a daily diary of what you eat and how it makes you feel.

Stay hydrated. Slowing down and avoiding foods that are difficult to digest are great ways to prevent problems. Staying

See **ENEMY** on page 18

MY NAME IS

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AND I HAVE

C-O-P-D

AND I TAKE

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BREO ELLIPTA can help improve your breathing.

- Once-daily BREO helps increase airflow from the lungs for a full 24 hours. Your results may vary.
- In patients with a history of COPD flare-ups, BREO helps reduce the risk of future flare-ups. This is when symptoms are worse for several days and require steroids (oral or injectable), antibiotics, and/or a hospital stay. BREO is not for use to treat sudden symptoms of COPD and won't replace a rescue inhaler.

Talk to your doctor about BREO, and visit myBREO.com or call 1-800-600-BREO (2736) to get your first full prescription free.*

(COPD is Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease)

APPROVED USES

BREO ELLIPTA is approved for adults with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), including chronic bronchitis, emphysema, or both. BREO ELLIPTA is a prescription medicine that is used long term as 1 inhalation 1 time each day to improve symptoms of COPD for better breathing and to reduce the number of flare-ups (the worsening of your COPD symptoms for several days). BREO is not for use to treat sudden symptoms of COPD and won't replace a rescue inhaler. BREO is not for the treatment of asthma.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

- **BREO ELLIPTA is only approved for use in COPD. BREO is NOT approved for use in asthma.**
- **People with asthma who take long-acting beta₂-adrenergic agonist (LABA) medicines, such as vilanterol (one of the medicines in BREO), have an increased risk of death from asthma problems. It is not known if LABA medicines increase the risk of death in people with COPD.**
- **Call your healthcare provider if breathing problems worsen over time while using BREO.**
- **Get emergency medical care if** your breathing problems worsen quickly, or if you use your rescue inhaler but it does not relieve your breathing problems.
- **Do not use BREO to treat sudden symptoms of COPD.** Always have a rescue inhaler with you to treat sudden symptoms.
- **BREO is not for the treatment of asthma. It is not known if BREO is safe and effective in people with asthma.**
- Do not use BREO if you have severe allergy to milk proteins or any of the ingredients in BREO. Ask your healthcare provider if you are not sure.
- **Do not** use BREO more often than prescribed.
- **Do not take BREO with other medicines that contain a LABA for any reason. Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take and about all of your health conditions.**
- **BREO can cause serious side effects, including:**
 - **pneumonia.** People with COPD have a higher chance of getting pneumonia. BREO may increase the chance of getting pneumonia. Call your healthcare provider if you notice any of the following symptoms: increase in mucus (sputum) production; change in mucus color; fever; chills; increased cough; increased breathing problems
 - **thrush (fungal infection) in mouth and/or throat.** You may develop a yeast infection (*Candida albicans*) in your mouth or throat. Rinse your mouth with water without swallowing after use to help prevent thrush in your mouth and throat.
 - **serious allergic reactions.** Call your healthcare provider or get emergency medical care if you get any of the following symptoms of a serious allergic reaction: rash; hives; swelling of the face, mouth, and tongue; breathing problems

BREO[®] ELLIPTA[®]
(fluticasone furoate 100 mcg and vilanterol 25 mcg inhalation powder)



(serious side effects, cont'd)

- **sudden breathing problems immediately after inhaling your medicine**
- **effects on heart:** increased blood pressure; a fast and/or irregular heartbeat; chest pain
- **effects on nervous system:** tremor; nervousness
- **reduced adrenal function.** This can happen when you stop taking an oral corticosteroid (such as prednisone) and start taking a medicine containing an inhaled corticosteroid (such as BREO). Symptoms include: feeling tired; lack of energy; weakness; nausea and vomiting; low blood pressure.
- **changes in laboratory blood values (sugar, potassium)**
- **weakened immune system and increased chance of getting infections (immunosuppression).** You should avoid exposure to chickenpox and measles, and, if exposed, consult your healthcare provider without delay. Worsening of existing tuberculosis, fungal, bacterial, viral, or parasitic infections, or herpes infection of the eye (ocular herpes simplex) may occur.
- **bone thinning or weakness (osteoporosis)**
- **eye problems including glaucoma and cataracts.** You should have regular eye exams while using BREO.
- **Common side effects of BREO include:**
 - runny nose and sore throat
 - upper respiratory tract infection
 - headache
 - thrush in mouth and/or throat. Rinse your mouth without swallowing after use to help prevent this

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

*Restrictions apply. See myBREO.com for eligibility rules.

Please see Brief Summary of Prescribing Information for BREO ELLIPTA on adjacent pages.



BREO ELLIPTA was developed in collaboration with **Theravance**



GSK for you

If you don't have prescription coverage and can't afford your medicines, visit GSKforyou.com or call **1-866-GSK-FOR-U** (1-866-475-3678)

BREO® ELLIPTA®
(fluticasone furoate 100 mcg and
vilanterol 25 mcg inhalation powder) **BRIEF SUMMARY**

Read the Medication Guide that comes with BREO ELLIPTA (*BREE-oh-ee-LIP-ta*) before you start using it and each time you get a refill. There may be new information. This summary does not take the place of talking to your healthcare provider about your medical condition or treatment.

What is the most important information I should know about BREO ELLIPTA?

BREO ELLIPTA is only approved for use in chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). BREO ELLIPTA is NOT approved for use in asthma.

BREO ELLIPTA can cause serious side effects, including:

- **People with asthma who take long-acting beta₂-adrenergic agonist (LABA) medicines, such as vilanterol (one of the medicines in BREO ELLIPTA), have an increased risk of death from asthma problems.** It is not known whether fluticasone furoate, the other medicine in BREO ELLIPTA, reduces the risk of death from asthma problems seen with LABA medicines.
- **It is not known if LABA medicines, such as vilanterol (one of the medicines in BREO ELLIPTA), increase the risk of death in people with COPD.**
- **Call your healthcare provider if breathing problems worsen over time while using BREO ELLIPTA.** You may need different treatment.
- **Get emergency medical care if:**
 - your breathing problems worsen quickly
 - you use your rescue inhaler, but it does not relieve your breathing problems.

What is BREO ELLIPTA?

BREO ELLIPTA combines an inhaled corticosteroid (ICS) medicine, fluticasone furoate, and a LABA medicine, vilanterol.

- ICS medicines, such as fluticasone furoate (one of the medicines in BREO ELLIPTA), help to decrease inflammation in the lungs. Inflammation in the lungs can lead to breathing problems.
- LABA medicines, such as vilanterol (one of the medicines in BREO ELLIPTA), help the muscles around the airways in your lungs stay relaxed to prevent symptoms such as wheezing, cough, chest tightness, and shortness of breath. These symptoms can happen when the muscles around the airways tighten. This makes it hard to breathe.

BREO ELLIPTA is used for COPD. COPD is a chronic lung disease that includes chronic bronchitis, emphysema, or both. BREO ELLIPTA is a prescription medicine that is used long term as 1 inhalation 1 time each day to improve symptoms of COPD for better breathing and to reduce the number of flare-ups (the worsening of your COPD symptoms for several days).

- **BREO ELLIPTA is not for use to treat sudden symptoms of COPD.** Always have a rescue inhaler (an inhaled, short-acting bronchodilator) with you to treat sudden symptoms. If you do not have a rescue inhaler, contact your healthcare provider to have one prescribed for you.
- **BREO ELLIPTA is not for the treatment of asthma. It is not known if BREO ELLIPTA is safe and effective in people with asthma.**
- BREO ELLIPTA should not be used in children. It is not known if BREO ELLIPTA is safe and effective in children.

Who should not use BREO ELLIPTA?

Do not use BREO ELLIPTA if you:

- have a severe allergy to milk proteins. Ask your healthcare provider if you are not sure.
- are allergic to fluticasone furoate, vilanterol, or any of the ingredients in BREO ELLIPTA. See "What are the ingredients in BREO ELLIPTA?" below for a complete list of ingredients.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before using BREO ELLIPTA?

Tell your healthcare provider about all of your health conditions, including if you:

- have heart problems
- have high blood pressure
- have seizures
- have thyroid problems
- have diabetes
- have liver problems
- have weak bones (osteoporosis)
- have an immune system problem
- have eye problems such as glaucoma or cataracts
- are allergic to any of the ingredients in BREO ELLIPTA, any other medicines, or food products. See "What are the ingredients in BREO ELLIPTA?" below for a complete list of ingredients.
- have any type of viral, bacterial, or fungal infection
- are exposed to chickenpox or measles or have been around anyone who has chickenpox or measles
- have any other medical conditions
- are pregnant or planning to become pregnant. It is not known if BREO ELLIPTA may harm your unborn baby.
- are breastfeeding. It is not known if the medicines in BREO ELLIPTA pass into your milk and if they can harm your baby.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and non-prescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. BREO ELLIPTA and certain other medicines may interact with each other. This may cause serious side effects. Especially, tell your healthcare provider if you take antifungal or anti-HIV medicines.

Know the medicines you take. Keep a list of them to show your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine.

How should I use BREO ELLIPTA?

Read the step-by-step instructions for using BREO ELLIPTA in the Medication Guide.

- **Do not** use BREO ELLIPTA unless your healthcare provider has taught you how to use the inhaler and you understand how to use it correctly.
- Use BREO ELLIPTA exactly as prescribed. **Do not** use BREO ELLIPTA more often than prescribed.
- Use 1 inhalation of BREO ELLIPTA 1 time each day. Use BREO ELLIPTA at the same time each day.
- If you miss a dose of BREO ELLIPTA, take it as soon as you remember. Do not take more than 1 inhalation per day. Take your next dose at your usual time. Do not take 2 doses at one time.
- If you take too much BREO ELLIPTA, call your healthcare provider and get medical help right away if you have any unusual symptoms, such as worsening shortness of breath, chest pain, increased heart rate, or shakiness.
- **Do not use other medicines that contain a LABA for any reason.** Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist if any of your other medicines are LABA medicines.
- Do not stop using BREO ELLIPTA unless told to do so by your healthcare provider because your symptoms might get worse. Your healthcare provider will change your medicines as needed.
- **BREO ELLIPTA does not relieve sudden symptoms.** Always have a rescue inhaler with you to treat sudden symptoms. If you do not have a rescue inhaler, call your healthcare provider to have one prescribed for you.
- Call your healthcare provider or get medical care right away if:
 - your breathing problems get worse
 - you need to use your rescue inhaler more often than usual
 - your rescue inhaler does not work as well to relieve your symptoms
 - you need to use 4 or more inhalations of your rescue inhaler in 24 hours for 2 or more days in a row
 - you use 1 whole canister of your rescue inhaler in 8 weeks

What are the possible side effects with BREO ELLIPTA?

BREO ELLIPTA can cause serious side effects, including:

- **See "What is the most important information I should know about BREO ELLIPTA?"**
- **pneumonia.** People with COPD have a higher chance of getting pneumonia. BREO ELLIPTA may increase the chance of getting pneumonia. Call your healthcare provider if you notice any of the following symptoms:
 - increase in mucus (sputum) production
 - change in mucus color
 - fever
 - chills
 - increased cough
 - increased breathing problems

(Continued on the next page)

BREO[®] ELLIPTA[®]
(fluticasone furoate 100 mcg and
vilanterol 25 mcg inhalation powder)

BRIEF SUMMARY (cont'd)

(serious side effects, cont'd)

- **thrush (fungal infection) in mouth and throat.** You may develop a yeast infection (*Candida albicans*) in your mouth or throat. Rinse your mouth with water without swallowing after using BREO ELLIPTA to help prevent thrush in your mouth and throat.
- **serious allergic reactions.** Call your healthcare provider or get emergency medical care if you get any of the following symptoms of a serious allergic reaction:
 - rash
 - swelling of the face, mouth, and tongue
 - hives
 - breathing problems
- **sudden breathing problems immediately after inhaling your medicine**
- **effects on heart**
 - increased blood pressure
 - a fast and/or irregular heartbeat
 - chest pain
- **effects on nervous system**
 - tremor
 - nervousness
- **reduced adrenal function (adrenal insufficiency).** Adrenal insufficiency is a condition in which the adrenal glands do not make enough steroid hormones. This can happen when you stop taking oral corticosteroid medicines (such as prednisone) and start taking a medicine containing an inhaled corticosteroid (such as BREO ELLIPTA). When your body is under stress from fever, trauma (such as a car accident), infection, surgery, or worse COPD symptoms, adrenal insufficiency can get worse and may cause death. Symptoms of adrenal insufficiency include:
 - feeling tired (fatigue)
 - nausea and vomiting
 - lack of energy
 - low blood pressure
 - weakness
- **changes in laboratory blood values (sugar, potassium)**
- **weakened immune system and increased chance of getting infections (immunosuppression)**
- **bone thinning or weakness (osteoporosis)**
- **eye problems including glaucoma and cataracts.** You should have regular eye exams while using BREO ELLIPTA.

Common side effects of BREO ELLIPTA include:

- runny nose and sore throat
- upper respiratory tract infection
- headache
- thrush in the mouth and/or throat. Rinse your mouth without swallowing after use to help prevent this.

Tell your healthcare provider about any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.

These are not all the side effects with BREO ELLIPTA. Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for more information.

Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

What are the ingredients in BREO ELLIPTA?

Active ingredients: fluticasone furoate, vilanterol

Inactive ingredients: lactose monohydrate (contains milk proteins), magnesium stearate

Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for additional information about BREO ELLIPTA. You can also contact the company that makes BREO ELLIPTA (toll free) at 1-888-825-5249 or at www.myBREO.com.

BREO and ELLIPTA are trademarks of GlaxoSmithKline.
BREO ELLIPTA was developed in collaboration with **Theravance**

gsk GlaxoSmithKline

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Research Triangle Park, NC 27709

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May 2013

BRE:1MG

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The need for ZZZZs

Sleep is when the body produces hormones to repair cells and fight off illness, so a lack of it can leave a person susceptible to everything from diabetes to cancer. But quality sleep is about more than just crawling into bed.

University of Pennsylvania sleep researcher Michael Grandner believes that physical activity is key. How much and what type depends on the individual, but he recommends 30 to 45 minutes every day.

Also, evidence suggests that giving your brain a good workout can help you become tired, he adds. But there's a difference between mentally taxing and emotionally taxing activities.

"Stress makes it harder to get to sleep, harder to stay asleep and harder to get back to sleep once you've woken up," Grandner says. "It's important to take enough time, so that when you go to bed your mind isn't still dealing with the issues of the day."

Research conducted by Masashi Yanagisawa of the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center indicates that mental attitude in the hours before sleep matters. Were you happy to be awake, or reluctant? Your brain remembers how long you've been awake and how much sleep you need, he says. If you're in the reluctant group, you may need a lot more sleep to recover.

To make the most of the sleep you do get, avoid too much alcohol, caffeine or tobacco in the evening, and avoid bright lights when trying to sleep.

"If you do wake up during the night, don't linger in bed," Grandner adds.

"This will help you sleep better on subsequent nights, rather than training your body that bed equals awake."



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ENEMY *continued from page 14*

hydrated every day by drinking four to eight cups of water – or enough fluids to keep your urine pale – and consuming ample fiber (20 to 30 grams) from whole grains, fruits and vegetables are additional ways to ensure that food moves smoothly through the digestive tract. Encouraging the growth of healthy bacteria can also assist your body in attaining the maximum nutrients from foods. Good bacteria can be consumed through probiotics in supplement form, or found naturally in yogurt and fermented foods such as sauerkraut, kombucha and kimchi.

Consider seeing a specialist. “Decreased stomach acid production, or a deficit of digestive enzymes, can also adversely affect digestion and lead to symptoms of gas or bloating,” registered dietitian Sonya Angelone says. “Finding the root cause of the discomfort is important to correct the problem instead of just managing the symptoms.” Consulting with a dietitian, naturopath or gastroenterologist may be necessary. Such experts can assess your individual situation and help you rediscover the joy in eating.

Michelle Gibeault Traub is a registered dietitian and health writer.

Online resources

The American Gastroenterological Association's Patient Center
www.gastro.org/patient-center

The National Digestive Diseases Information Clearinghouse (NDDIC)
digestive.niddk.nih.gov

VA curbs MRSA infections in hospitals, long-term care facilities

In early 2007, VA began an infection-control program throughout its 153 hospitals to reduce the number of patients contracting MRSA (methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*) infections, a matter of growing public concern. In January 2009, the program was expanded to the 133 VA long-term care facilities nationwide.

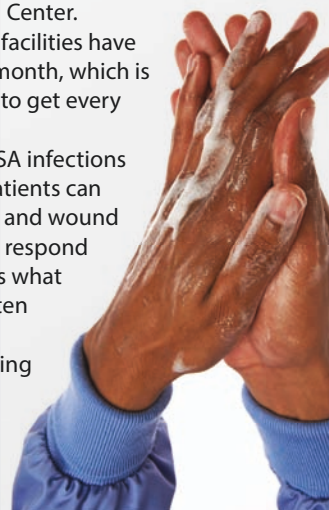
In 2011, VA reported that the program had resulted in a 62 percent drop in the rate of infections caused by MRSA in intensive care units, and a 45 percent drop in MRSA prevalence in other hospital areas, including surgical and rehabilitation units. A recent study in the *American Journal of Infection Control* shows that over 42 months, there was a 36 percent decline in MRSA infections in long-term care facilities as well.

“Our rates are very low,” says Dr. Martin E. Evans, director of the MRSA program at Lexington (Ky.) VA Medical Center.

“Around 70 percent of our facilities have no MRSA infections each month, which is quite striking.” The goal is to get every site to zero, he adds.

In medical facilities, MRSA infections can lead to pneumonia. Patients can also develop bloodstream and wound infections. MRSA does not respond well to antibiotics, which is what makes it so serious and often life-threatening.

Evans says VA is expanding its program to other superbugs and bad bacteria.



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Quality questions for quality care

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) reminds us that good health often depends on good communication. “Asking questions and providing information to your doctor and other care providers can improve your care,” it explains. “Talking with your doctor builds trust and leads to better results, quality, safety and satisfaction.”

Communication can also help us feel at ease when choosing a course of care. “One of the best ways to communicate with your doctor and health-care team is by asking questions,” according to AHRQ. So go to your physician armed with questions that will help him or her design care that works for you. Here are a few good ones:

- What is the test for?
- How many times have you performed this procedure?
- When will I get the results?
- Why do I need this treatment?
- Are there any alternatives?
- What are the possible complications?
- Which hospital is best for my needs?
- How do you spell the name of that drug?
- Are there any side effects?
- Will this medicine interact with ones I'm taking?

www.ahrq.gov/patients-consumers/index.html

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Congress OKs temporary private care

BY TOM PHILPOTT

In response to a spreading scandal over patient wait times at VA hospitals and clinics, both the House and Senate in June voted to allow many more thousands of veterans temporary access to private-sector health care at government expense.

The House unanimously passed the Veterans Access to Care Act (H.R. 4810), an emergency plan to require the Department of Veterans Affairs to pay for non-VA care if veterans enrolled in VA health care cannot get appointments within wait-time goals or if they live more than 40 miles from a VA medical facility. Rep. Jeff Miller, R-Fla., chairman of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, sponsored the bill.

The Senate passed almost identical language as part of a more comprehensive benefits bill. Sens. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., VA committee chairman, and John McCain, R-Ariz., co-sponsored the Veterans' Access to Care Through Choice, Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014 (S. 2450).

Last year, VA spent 10 percent of its health budget – \$4.8 billion – on private-sector care. That covered 15.3 million outpatient visits, a 72 percent increase since 2008. Eligibility for non-VA care, however, is complex. Access is based on individual circumstances and VA pre-authorization is usually required.

Worried that patients are dying awaiting timely care, Congress wants those hurdles lowered at least temporarily. Both the House and Senate language on easing access to private-sector care would sunset in two years.

The American Legion helped draft the language and the two-year limit, said Peter Gaytan, executive director of the Legion's Washington office. The Legion and other veterans service organizations want Congress to keep its primary focus on improving the VA integrated health-care system. They oppose calls by some lawmakers and lobbyists to privatize VA health care.

Spurring Congress to find ways to improve access are results of a flash audit of scheduling practices at VA hospitals and clinics nationwide,

and an investigation by the VA inspector general. Both confirmed what a physician whistle-blower revealed last spring: widespread data manipulation of medical appointments at VA facilities. The findings showed patient wait times underreported at 70 or more facilities.

By gaming an archaic and poorly monitored appointments system, administrators or staff pretended that performance goals were being met. This in turn secured for them speedier promotions or bigger bonuses – at the expense of veterans needing care.



World War II veteran Harley Parker, 93, center, seeks help at The American Legion's crisis center at Post 1 in Phoenix on June 10. Nick Oza/The Republic

One need not question then-VA Secretary Eric Shinseki's claim that he was blindsided by these practices to conclude that the Legion was right to call for his resignation. As the scandal grew, Shinseki's May 30 resignation became a critical first step to address a crisis of confidence by patients, Congress and the public.

One of the most damning pieces of evidence of a leadership meltdown was an April 26, 2010, internal memo

titled "Inappropriate Scheduling Practices." Written by William Schoenhard, then deputy undersecretary for health administration and maintenance, it had been sent to VA health network directors. The nine-page memo, Gaytan said, showed that VA leaders knew not only that data was being manipulated, but how it was done, and had directed supervisors to stop. Yet the abuses continued.

Acting VA Secretary Sloan D. Gibson and his deputies conceded that there had been "a systemic and totally unacceptable lack of integrity" in VA scheduling practices. As the FBI began criminal investigations, Gibson announced immediate steps to improve access to care, including more medical staff overtime, expansion of clinic hours, and an additional \$300 million to be spent through September on patient referrals to private-sector health-care providers.

Tom Philpott has been covering military personnel and veterans issues for more than 30 years.

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Serve those who served

Fisher House CEO calls his foundation's mission 'beautiful in its simplicity.'

BY MATT GRILLS

As chairman and CEO of Fisher House, Ken Fisher has heard from thousands of military and veteran families, all grateful for a free place to stay while loved ones receive medical care.

There's one note, though, he cherishes most.

"It says, 'Dear Ken' – not Mr. Fisher, I don't like that – 'thank you for allowing me to spend Christmas with my son.' That's it.

"Can you imagine?" he says. "What would have happened if this program wasn't there and these parents couldn't afford a hotel? What if they couldn't fly there because their government travel orders had already been used? They might have had to drive for a week and pay for gas, too."

Fisher believes such families have sacrificed enough, especially since 9/11. Since taking over the foundation, he's worked with DoD and VA to learn where needs are greatest, doubling the number of Fisher Houses to 64.

Zachary Fisher, a real estate developer and one of only two Americans to be named an honorary veteran, built the first two Fisher Houses in 1990. He died in 1999, but his family – chiefly Ken, his grandnephew – has expanded the Fisher legacy.

A senior partner at Fisher Brothers, Ken oversees the leasing, management and marketing of 5 million square feet of Class A commercial space in midtown Manhattan. He is co-chairman of the *Intrepid* Sea, Air & Space Museum, and in 2007 he served on the President's Commission on Care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors.

This month he will speak at The American Legion's national convention in Charlotte, N.C.

The American Legion Magazine spoke with Fisher about the charity's growth at home and abroad, why the Fisher House program works, and its effort to cover military death benefits during last year's partial government shutdown.

The Fisher House concept is 25 years old. How did its network of comfort homes begin?

The Fisher family's involvement with the military and the philanthropy that we do started with USS *Intrepid*. It was brought to my uncle's attention that after so many years of service the ship was essentially going to be sold as scrap metal. Zach found out and said it was a piece of history and should be preserved. So he worked with the Navy and a few well-connected people and was able to save it from the scrapheap. It was brought to New York around 1981 and became not only a centerpiece honoring the military but the catalyst behind the West Side revival.

A lot of big names were helping him, but Zach was the one who provided the seed money. It was his determination and drive that really made it possible. He wanted to do more for the military. So he made a phone call to Pauline Trost, who was married to Adm. Carlisle Trost, then the chief of naval operations. She would go to Bethesda from time to time to see troops in that hospital and noticed that families would come into the lobby with tons of luggage, no place to put it, no place to go. She told Zach that he should consider something along the lines of building housing for families to stay in if their loved ones are hospitalized. He thought that was an incredible idea and, in typical Zach Fisher form, reached into his pocket and built the first four Fisher Houses – first at Bethesda, shortly after that Walter Reed, the one at Brooke Army Medical Center and then one at Joint Base Lewis-McChord.

Now, Zach had to work with the government in terms of how this was going to be done. But his only condition was that there had to be no charge. Then the need started to grow. Everybody wanted a Fisher House. It became like a badge of honor. So they formed the foundation, and it became the seed of the big tree that Fisher House is today.

With 64 houses now in operation, what goes into the decision to build a new one?

We don't just build a house in a place just because we have the money. We work with the surgeons general, we work with VA. They tell us where they think the needs are going to be the greatest, and that's where we go.

This was probably one of the first working partnerships between the government and the private sector. The government gives the land to us

and we build the house using our skill set, which is construction and development. Zach built them, then donated them to whichever branch of the military they served. They in turn would agree to operate, staff and maintain the houses in perpetuity. Once the houses were done we were able to move on to the next project, the next community, the next need, and not have to worry about fundraising for the maintenance. It would have been a constant effort, and we wouldn't have nearly the impact we have today.

We picked our lane using our skill set, took an unmet need and were able to engineer this partnership. In 21 years, our mission has not changed. One, we do what we do and we do it well. Two, we don't waste money. We are not a foundation that tries to be all things to all people. There will be a few stray missions, but essentially that is it. Fisher House is beautiful in its simplicity.

How did 9/11 and the war on terror accelerate Fisher House's work?

All of a sudden, Fisher House became a lot more relevant. We had the first casualties coming back from Afghanistan, and we knew we were going to have to ramp up our efforts. We'd already built a house in Landstuhl, so our first initiative after 9/11 was to build a second house because Germany was the first stopping point for the catastrophically wounded. Germany was also the first point for families to be reunited with their wounded if they could get there. The typical stay was just a couple of days and then, depending on the nature of the wound, they'd be flown back to the States and go to Walter Reed or Brooke or one of the Level 1 polytrauma centers around the country.

When I took over in 2003, the budget was a million dollars or something like that, and I said, "How on earth am I going to pay for all this?" We were already in the defense bill, but for a very small amount of money. We managed to stay there, but it's never been commensurate with the kind of capital program we've undertaken.

Then the most amazing thing happened. Bits and pieces of the Fisher House story leaked out, and people embraced it. There was this wave of support for military foundations. Some were true to their missions and honored donations, and some did not. But there was such an outpouring of support. People just wanted to give.

The first interview I ever did on television was with Chris Matthews. We got about 15 minutes, which at that time was more than we'd ever gotten. And that really catapulted us into the

OPPOSITE: Fisher House Chairman and CEO Ken Fisher carries on the legacy of his great-uncle, Zachary Fisher. Photo by Amy C. Elliott

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- **ELIQUIS is not for patients with artificial heart valves.**
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What is the most important information I should know about ELIQUIS (apixaban)?

For people taking ELIQUIS for atrial fibrillation: Do not stop taking ELIQUIS without talking to the doctor who prescribed it for you. Stopping ELIQUIS increases your risk of having a stroke. ELIQUIS may need to be stopped, prior to surgery or a medical or dental procedure. Your doctor will tell you when you should stop taking ELIQUIS and when you may start taking it again. If you have to stop taking ELIQUIS, your doctor may prescribe another medicine to help prevent a blood clot from forming.

ELIQUIS can cause bleeding which can be serious, and rarely may lead to death. This is because ELIQUIS is a blood thinner medicine that reduces blood clotting.

You may have a higher risk of bleeding if you take ELIQUIS and take other medicines that increase your risk of bleeding, such as aspirin, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (called NSAIDs), warfarin (COUMADIN®), heparin, selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) or serotonin norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors (SNRIs), and other medicines to help prevent or treat blood clots.

Tell your doctor if you take any of these medicines. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure if your medicine is one listed above.

While taking ELIQUIS:

- you may bruise more easily
- it may take longer than usual for any bleeding to stop

Call your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of these signs or symptoms of bleeding when taking ELIQUIS:

- unexpected bleeding, or bleeding that lasts a long time, such as:
 - unusual bleeding from the gums
 - nosebleeds that happen often

- menstrual bleeding or vaginal bleeding that is heavier than normal
- bleeding that is severe or you cannot control
- red, pink, or brown urine
- red or black stools (looks like tar)
- cough up blood or blood clots
- vomit blood or your vomit looks like coffee grounds
- unexpected pain, swelling, or joint pain
- headaches, feeling dizzy or weak

ELIQUIS (apixaban) is not for patients with artificial heart valves.

Spinal or epidural blood clots or bleeding (hematoma).

People who take a blood thinner medicine (anticoagulant) like ELIQUIS, and have medicine injected into their spinal and epidural area, or have a spinal puncture have a risk of forming a blood clot that can cause long-term or permanent loss of the ability to move (paralysis). Your risk of developing a spinal or epidural blood clot is higher if:

- a thin tube called an epidural catheter is placed in your back to give you certain medicine
- you take NSAIDs or a medicine to prevent blood from clotting
- you have a history of difficult or repeated epidural or spinal punctures
- you have a history of problems with your spine or have had surgery on your spine

If you take ELIQUIS and receive spinal anesthesia or have a spinal puncture, your doctor should watch you closely for symptoms of spinal or epidural blood clots or bleeding. Tell your doctor right away if you have tingling, numbness, or muscle weakness, especially in your legs and feet.

What is ELIQUIS?

ELIQUIS is a prescription medicine used to:

- reduce the risk of stroke and blood clots in people who have atrial fibrillation.

- reduce the risk of forming a blood clot in the legs and lungs of people who have just had hip or knee replacement surgery.

It is not known if ELIQUIS is safe and effective in children.

Who should not take ELIQUIS (apixaban)?

Do not take ELIQUIS if you:

- currently have certain types of abnormal bleeding
- have had a serious allergic reaction to ELIQUIS. Ask your doctor if you are not sure

What should I tell my doctor before taking ELIQUIS?

Before you take ELIQUIS, tell your doctor if you:

- have kidney or liver problems
- have any other medical condition
- have ever had bleeding problems
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if ELIQUIS will harm your unborn baby
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known if ELIQUIS passes into your breast milk. You and your doctor should decide if you will take ELIQUIS or breastfeed. You should not do both

Tell all of your doctors and dentists that you are taking ELIQUIS. They should talk to the doctor who prescribed ELIQUIS for you, before you have **any** surgery, medical or dental procedure.

Tell your doctor about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Some of your other medicines may affect the way ELIQUIS works. Certain medicines may increase your risk of bleeding or stroke when taken with ELIQUIS.

How should I take ELIQUIS?

Take ELIQUIS exactly as prescribed by your doctor. Take ELIQUIS twice every day with or without food, and do not change your dose or stop taking it unless your doctor tells you to. If you miss a dose of ELIQUIS, take it as soon as you remember, and do

not take more than one dose at the same time. **Do not run out of ELIQUIS (apixaban). Refill your prescription before you run out.** When leaving the hospital following hip or knee replacement, be sure that you will have ELIQUIS available to avoid missing any doses. **If you are taking ELIQUIS for atrial fibrillation, stopping ELIQUIS may increase your risk of having a stroke.**

What are the possible side effects of ELIQUIS?

- See “What is the most important information I should know about ELIQUIS?”
- ELIQUIS can cause a skin rash or severe allergic reaction. Call your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of the following symptoms:
 - chest pain or tightness
 - swelling of your face or tongue
 - trouble breathing or wheezing
 - feeling dizzy or faint

Tell your doctor if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.

These are not all of the possible side effects of ELIQUIS. For more information, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

This is a brief summary of the most important information about ELIQUIS. For more information, talk with your doctor or pharmacist, call 1-855-ELIQUIS (1-855-354-7847), or go to www.ELIQUIS.com.

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March 2014
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Fisher House, by the numbers

64

Number of Fisher Houses in the United States, Great Britain and Germany

10

Average length of stay (days)

45-60

Average length of stay for families of combat casualties (days)

832

Daily lodging capacity (families)

22,000

Families served in 2013

**\$35
million**

Savings for families in lodging, food and transportation costs in 2013

**5.2
million**

Number of lodging days offered since 1990

public eye. But we were still one of the best-kept secrets in America. The reason why is that I didn't feel I would ever have enough to be able to siphon money off to advertise. I didn't do direct mail because that was very expensive and very wasteful. Advertising on television was just a dream. One, I couldn't afford it; and two, even if I could, I don't believe in spending a dollar to make a quarter. It's completely contrary to the way I think as a businessman.

Even then, a very high percentage of the donated dollar went to the program. Today it's 95 cents. But the one constant is that the money taken out for administrative costs can all be tracked, and only one penny goes toward self-promotion and fundraising. We've been able to capitalize a lot on word-of-mouth.

Cost savings aside, what else does a Fisher House stay offer a military or veteran family?

What really makes this program is the support system that forms inside the house, which has not changed in 21 years regardless of how big or small the house. The original houses were 5,000 feet;

houses we build today for VA can be as much as 16,000 square feet. They are designed to foster companionship. Each room has its own bathroom, its own TV, its own desk, its own bed. In that sense it's like a hotel, but it's not. It's a home, because if you don't feel like being alone, you walk downstairs, you cook dinner with another family, you do laundry with another family, you sit and decompress with another family. If you had a bad day, chances are there's another family in the house that already had that day, and they coach you through it. If you have a good day, they'll share your joy, because you're like one big family. That's the brick and mortar that holds the whole thing together.

Of the many families you've met, is there one encounter that's stayed with you?

That's a hard question to answer because every story is compelling. The first time my wife Tammy and I went to Walter Reed was in 2003, when (wounded troops) started coming back from Afghanistan. I got a call from the commander at Walter Reed, who said, "You should really come down here and see what you're doing." I said, "No, I don't want to intrude on these families." He said, "Don't look at it at that way. You need to see what you're doing," and I said, "OK, but no cameras. This can't be used for any kind of publicity for either of us."

So Tammy and I went there, and some of their wounds were horrific. We saw a Special Forces sergeant, and his arm was pinned to his body with a halo. He was sitting on his bed, and I said, "Hey, how are you doing?" And he comes over, shakes my hand and says, "Thank you." I said, "I'm here to thank you." My wife and I, just about the same time, ran out of the room because we were crying.

All we were doing was building houses. But when you go down there and you see what you're doing, man, it gets pretty heavy.

Two projects of which you're especially proud are the Fisher Houses at Dover Air Force Base and Great Britain.

When we deviate, we deviate in a way that's associated with the mission. Back in 2008, I got a phone call from the Army surgeon general. Was I aware of what was going on at Dover? He said that families come in at 4:30 in the morning to repatriate their loved ones' remains – to basically welcome their loved ones home. After doing the unthinkable, they get in a car to drive five or six miles to a cheap hotel. So using a fund I keep as a

sort of chairman's prerogative fund, I built a Fisher House at Dover so that families – if they can get there to welcome their loved one home, they don't get a lot of notice – can walk 50, 60 yards and not have to worry about traveling anywhere. We also built a nondenominational spiritual center so that if they want to pray or meditate, they walk out the front door and across a little street. We call it the Fisher House for the Families of the Fallen. I'm more proud of that than anything else because we did that house in about seven months.

The next project was a little bit outside the box. When the British military are wounded they get folded into the national health-care system; they don't have a VA. Somebody who just hit an IED could be next to someone who just had their appendix out. They got together and said they'd like to be able to recover together the way the Americans do. The military talked to the government, and it decided to take a chunk of a new hospital being built in Birmingham and make a wounded warrior ward. It's basically a military hospital within the hospital.

A friend of my wife's came to the opening of the Los Angeles VA Fisher House and said, "Boy, wouldn't it be great if we could have one of these in England?" I said, "Why not?" One of our goals at FH is to educate about the plight of the military family, and to me the British are just an extension of us. They didn't pay the same price we did over there, but they did pay a price.

We worked with the hospital trust and what I'd call the mirror image of Fisher House in England, Help for Heroes. We split it three ways: the trust, Help for Heroes and us. Prince Charles came and dedicated the house. It was a big deal.

We actually had to amend our charter, which only allowed us to do this on American soil. The idea's now global, but it highlights how lean and nimble we can be, that we were able to do this and never missed a beat in America.

Last October, Fisher House stepped in to cover troops' death benefits during the government shutdown. What does that say about our government and politics today?

I saw the story on the news, like everybody else, and I said, "You've got to be kidding me. Now they're playing games with the families of the fallen." We've had government shutdowns before, but never like this. I called up the president of Fisher House, and I said, "We can't allow this to happen. This is what we do. We have to fund this."

During the shutdown there were five combat

casualties, but it wasn't five families who were suffering. There were 29 who had lost a loved one in uniform, whether it be by suicide, sickness, training accident or combat. They get \$100,000 within the first 24 to 36 hours. Fisher House was prepared to fund \$2,900,000 that day.

I'm not going to tell you I was appalled because the death benefits weren't being paid. That was appalling enough. The House voted 435-0 to restore benefits, but when we heard the Senate might not vote because they were worried that certain members didn't want piecemeal solutions – they wanted the whole ball of wax or nothing – I was incensed. They've got Fisher House now, everybody's satisfied that the death benefits are dealt with, everybody can go back to squabbling – that's what got me. Yeah, I felt like a pawn. And I was. But if that's being used, use me all day, because at least I got (the troops') backs covered.

Describe Fisher House's relationship with The American Legion.

The American Legion has been a great supporter, not just with the help it gives us, but with its input. As VSOs, we can change what happens when injustices have been done or are being done. If we all pull together, we can make the changes. We're proud to even be mentioned in the same breath as The American Legion.

On the local level, volunteers are capital in the sense of time and help. If there's a Fisher House in the area of an American Legion post, hopefully they'll stop by and say hello. Check on my houses for me. Check on my families: "How are you guys doing? Do you need anything?" On the national level, we don't ask for anything. We fundraise, of course, but we always let what we do be the deciding factor. If you like what you see, join us.

Are you satisfied that Fisher House has lived up to its founder's vision?

How could it not have? The mission is so pure. Of course, Zach passed before 9/11, but I don't think he ever would have imagined that Fisher House would become the gold standard. Those are not just my words. Building a house in Britain, getting involved in the government shutdown and doing what we did were right up his alley. If I could have him back for five minutes, I think all he would do is smile. 🌿

Matt Grills is managing editor of The American Legion Magazine.

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‘Don’t worry, they’ll find you’

In his work as a VA Voluntary Service director and manager at the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, Jim Fratolillo knows Fisher House Boston’s value to VA patients.

Old or young, hospitalized veterans rest easier with their families just a building away. More, “they don’t have to worry about their families commuting,” Fratolillo says. “They know their spouses are taken care of. The operation here is first class. It’s just a real comforting place.”

In Boston and nationwide, American Legion posts – along with their Auxiliary units and SAL detachments – play a big role in helping build and sustain Fisher Houses.

“Before I opened the house, I wondered how this was going to work,” says Elizabeth St. Pierre, manager of Fisher House Boston. “I was reassured by other Fisher House managers, ‘Don’t worry, they’ll find you.’ And The American Legion, the Auxiliary, the Sons – they were the first people to contact me. And they’ve stuck with us.”

June Teague, a member of Edward J. Beatty Auxiliary Unit 24, organizes a cookie swap during the holidays and regularly asks St. Pierre what’s needed. “We went out and bought a woman sneakers, a hat, gloves, stuff like that,” she says. “A lot of the families come here and don’t think they’re going to be here as long as they are.”

Other times, donated funds are used to purchase extra shampoo, toothpaste, slippers and robes.

“My experience with the Legion and the Auxiliary is that they have a very keen sense of what that personal touch should be like,” St. Pierre says. “That fits with our Fisher House mission, because every guest should feel special.”

“The volunteers bring their personal reason for being there, their gratitude for veterans and military families, so there’s already a connection. They want to serve, they want to help, they want to bring comfort when it’s needed. They come up with great ideas.” 🌿

TOP: Jim Fratolillo of Houghs Neck Post 380 in Quincy, Mass., talks with Auxiliary member June Teague during a visit to Fisher House Boston, located at VA’s West Roxbury campus. **RIGHT:** Fisher House Boston is the 46th Fisher House built and the 15th at a VA medical center. With 20 suites, it is open to families of hospitalized veterans or active-duty servicemembers living 50 or more miles away. Photos by Matthew Healey





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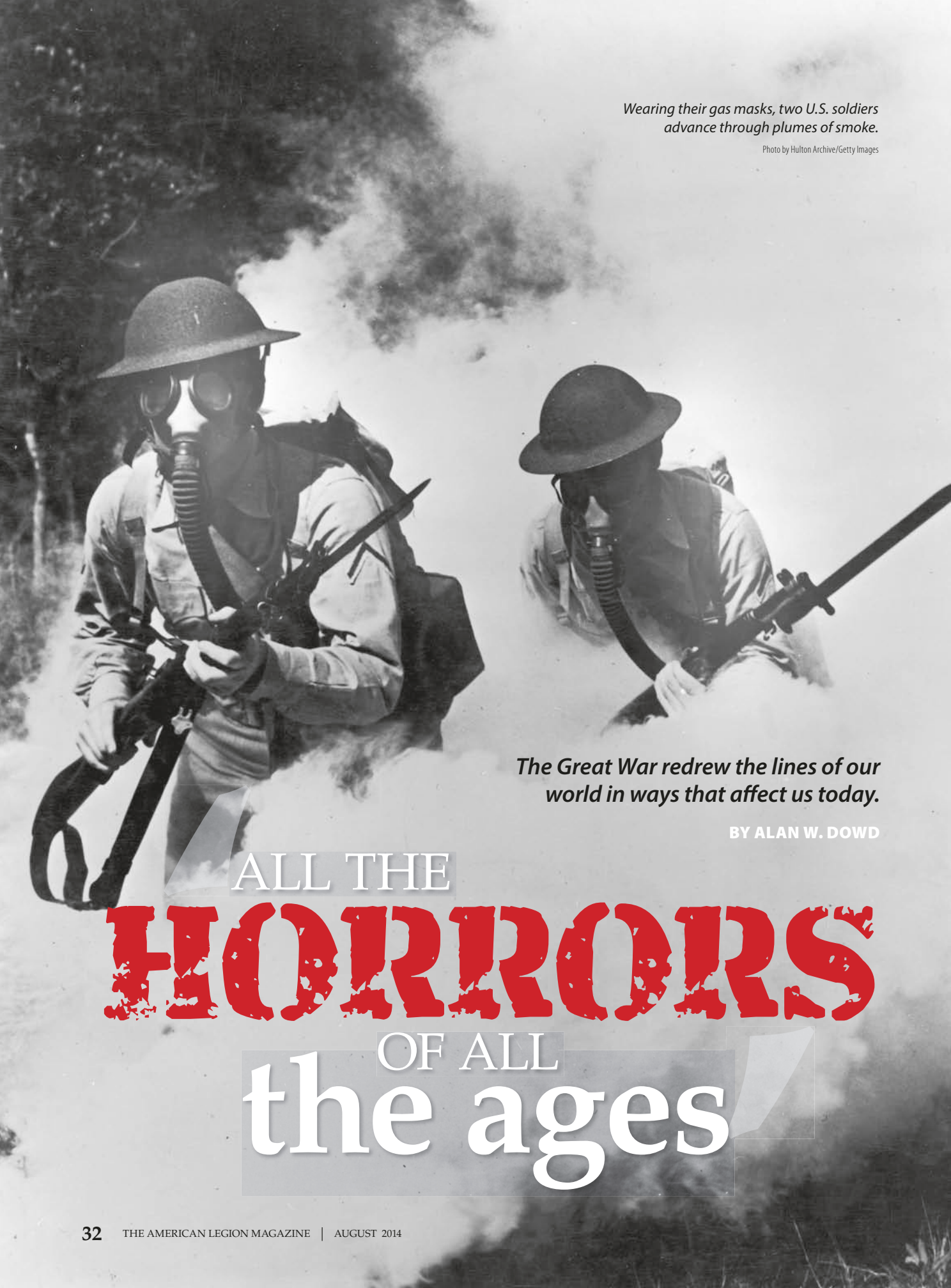
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*Wearing their gas masks, two U.S. soldiers
advance through plumes of smoke.*

Photo by Hulton Archive/Getty Images

*The Great War redrew the lines of our
world in ways that affect us today.*

BY ALAN W. DOWD

ALL THE **HORRORS** OF ALL the ages

World War I had many names. It was initially called “the Great War” because it was so sweeping in its reach and for the number of nations it drew into its vortex. H.G. Wells famously called it “the war that will end war.” Americans called it “the European War” until the United States was drawn in and newspapers began calling it “the World War.” President Woodrow Wilson described it as “the most terrible and disastrous of all wars,” believing that its very destructiveness would convince nations of the futility of war – and that he could somehow build a “concert for peace” out of the rubble.

Those labels lasted barely two decades, as a far more terrible, more disastrous war engulfed the world a generation later – a testament to how wrong the peacemakers at Versailles were. We still live in the long shadows cast by the peace they made and the war they waged a century ago.

WHAT THE WAR WROUGHT

Some historians say it was inevitable. Imperial Germany was emerging as a global power in the early 20th century. The Kaiser felt hemmed in and wanted a bigger slice of the world’s riches, as evidenced by his lunges toward the Philippines, Venezuela and Morocco in the years before the war. These incidents explain why President Theodore Roosevelt, as historian Edmund Morris writes, considered the Kaiser “the most dangerous man in the world.”

Military strength swelled across Europe: German military expenditures more than doubled between 1910 and 1914. In the 14 years before the war, Russia’s army grew by 16 percent, France’s by 27 percent, and Britain’s warship tonnage almost tripled.

Yet at the same time, European nations enjoyed deep commercial connections. German iron-ore imports from France grew sixtyfold between 1900 and 1913. Britain accounted for more than 14 percent of Germany’s exports.

Many believed such trade linkages made war unthinkable. Then came the summer of 1914, the assassination in Sarajevo and a cascade of secret treaties.

Winston Churchill described World War I as the moment when “all the horrors of all the ages were brought together.”

Indeed, the mating of fully industrialized 20th-century empires with 19th-century conceptions of warfare yielded an unprecedented level of killing. Some 10 million troops died during 52 months of war – more than the combat dead from all the wars in the preceding century combined.

The war employed both new and old technologies for killing: fighter planes, flamethrowers, tanks,

water-cooled machine guns, maneuverable submarines, industrialized chemical arsenals.

Germany was the first to use poison gas during the war, launching a chlorine attack in Belgium in April 1915. It worked, killing some 5,000 troops, and the Allies followed suit. By the end of the war, chemical weapons had killed 91,000. Postwar treaties tried to close Pandora’s box, but chemical weapons have been used in 11 conflicts since 1919, most recently in Syria in 2013.

Anglo-French forces lost 600,000 men during the Battle of the Somme, all to nudge the front seven miles along. Germany lost almost 300,000 men trying to capture Verdun – and failed. These ghastly casualty figures underscore why Wilson described leading America into the Great War as “a fearful thing.”

Not every byproduct of the war was an instrument of war, however. It produced The American Legion, which was born in Paris in March 1919; air-traffic control systems; international cooperation to combat hunger; and a revolution in battlefield medicine – mobile X-ray machines, antiseptic treatment of wounds, reconstructive surgery and “preventive inoculation.” All these innovations would serve mankind in peacetime.

The war also served as a proving ground for men like Dwight Eisenhower (who commanded a tank-maneuver training center), Douglas MacArthur (who led offensives in France), George Patton (who earned a Distinguished Service Cross in the U.S. Tank Corps) and William Halsey (who earned a Navy Cross commanding destroyers in the Atlantic).

FAUX NEUTRALITY

These men were serving a remarkably naive commander in chief. Wilson, after all, expected nations fighting for their survival to observe the legal nuances and niceties of America’s strange brand of neutrality. Although he vowed to be “neutral in fact as well as in name ... impartial in thought as well as in action,” the United States loaned the Allies \$2.5 billion in the war’s first two years, while loaning the Central Powers less than one-tenth that amount.

It was equally naive of Wilson to think that words would compel Germany to respect America’s faux neutrality. When German U-boats began attacking merchant ships, the president said he would hold the Kaiser to “strict accountability.” Yet when Americans were killed aboard *Falaba*, *Lusitania* and *Arabic*, he responded by writing letters.

To be fair, Wilson’s neutrality may have been his way of making a virtue out of necessity. America was ill-prepared for war, as Roosevelt detailed in late 1914. “Our navy is lamentably short in many different

material directions. There is actually but one torpedo for each torpedo tube,” he wrote. “For nearly two years, there has been no fleet maneuvering.”

The War Department set a goal of fielding 2 million troops in 1917. But between April and December of that year, the United States deployed only 200,000 troops to Europe – all of whom were still in training. France and Britain initially supplied John Pershing’s men with mortars and artillery.

This was predictable and avoidable. In the eight years before entering World War I, the United States devoted an average of 0.7 percent of GDP to defense.

Still, U.S. manpower and materiel turned the tide. America’s “productive strength ... was unequaled,” historian Paul Kennedy observes, noting that it churned out merchant ships by the hundreds. U.S. factories could produce a 7,500-ton ship in three days. Between mid-1917 and the end of the war, U.S. automakers built some 20,000 Liberty aircraft engines.

Nearly 5 million Americans served, and 116,516 died, in Europe’s civil war.

‘A PHRASE LOADED WITH DYNAMITE’

“It would be an irony of fate if my administration had to deal chiefly with foreign affairs,” Wilson remarked before his inauguration. Yet in drafting his peace plan, he proved himself a visionary statesman. Wilson’s Fourteen Points were so visionary that the world was not ready to embrace them in 1919 – and still wrestles with them today.

He envisioned “a partnership of democratic nations,” “the rights of nations great and small ... to choose their way of life,” “open covenants of peace, openly arrived at,” “freedom of navigation upon the seas,” removal of trade barriers, reduction of armaments, “impartial adjustment of all colonial claims,” borders based on “recognizable lines of nationality,” “autonomous development” for national minorities – all undergirded by a “general association of nations ... for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity.”

Embedded in Wilson’s postwar plan was the principle of self-determination. “Peoples may now be dominated and governed only by their own consent,” he declared. “Self-determination is not a mere phrase. It is an imperative principle of actions which statesmen will henceforth ignore at their peril.”

Wilson’s own secretary of state, Robert Lansing, called it “a phrase loaded with dynamite ... It will, I fear, cost thousands of lives.”

Pointing to Wilson’s “intemperate ... declarations,” Lansing asked, “When the president talks of ‘self-determination,’ what unit does he have in mind? Does he mean a race, or a territorial area, or a community?

Without a definite unit that is practical, application of this principle is dangerous to peace and stability.”

Wilson may have sensed the tides of history carrying humanity toward decentralization and democratization. But Lansing’s instincts were right. In 1900, there were 57 independent countries. Today, there are nearly 200. Many of them came into existence through self-determination movements; many of those movements triggered wars. Consider the United Nations’ newest member, South Sudan, which fought to secede from Sudan and is now in the midst of a fight that could further divide the country; or Kosovo, which cut itself away from Serbia and is now dealing with a Serbian enclave that wants to cut itself away from Kosovo; or Ukraine, which may divide into Russian and Ukrainian statelets; or Iraqi Kurdistan, which wants to turn its autonomy into independence.

Of course, these examples speak to the great sweep of Wilson’s vision. Much of what he advocated – an international order seeking peaceful settlement of disputes, an international organization committed to heading off great-power conflict, international borders determined by nationalities, open markets, open treaties – was accepted in 1945.

SEEDS OF DESTRUCTION

The war left in its wake a trail of bitter ironies and broken promises.

It began with Europe’s empires dominating the world, but it left the continent broke and broken: total European indebtedness to the United States surpassed \$11.6 billion – the rough equivalent of \$157.8 billion today. Europe was smashed into a jagged jumble of ethno-national shards.

The war gave us the Weimar Republic (seedbed for Hitler’s Nazis), the Polish Corridor and French acquisitions of resource-rich German lands (seedbed for Hitler’s territorial grievances), and a dismembered Germany (seedbed for Hitler’s Anschluss). All told, Germany lost 13 percent of its territory and 10 percent of its population at Versailles.

The war rolled back the frontiers of Russia, resurrected an independent Poland and midwived new nations from the Adriatic to the Baltic – all of which would be undone by Hitler and Stalin.

The war ended the Russian Empire but spawned the Russian Revolution, which spawned the Soviet Union, which gave the world something far worse than the czar.

Wilson promised “peace without victory,” and Germany seized upon his plan as a face-saving way to end the war. But Wilson’s partners were not in a magnanimous mood when they arrived at Versailles. “Their concerns related to the future weakening of a

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▼ Left side of the receiver features a soldier making his way through the jungle with his machete and Thompson in hand. Next, a pair of Huey helicopters picks up troops in a landing zone. At the end of the receiver, you can see two warriors manning the powerful M60 machine gun. At the far end of the left receiver is the POW/MIA flag. It has become an enduring symbol of Vietnam.

◀ Also featured on the left side is the iconic Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, awarded by South Vietnam to those who fought in Vietnam. Below the image we have set a banner that reads: "Lest We Forget," as a remembrance to all the veterans who so proudly served our country during the Vietnam War.

◀ Right side features a logo commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War. Inside the oval frame is an American warrior, the distinctive silhouette of Vietnam and a pair of U.S. military helicopters.

▲ The right side features four meticulously rendered scenes bookended with a pair of Asian dragons. The first shows a Patrol Boat, River (PBR) cruising along the Mekong Delta. Next are the sandbag walls and towering howitzers of Khe Sanh. The 6,000 man garrison at Khe Sanh firebase held out for more than two months against two NVA divisions. Prominently featured in the center are American warriors patrolling among the rubble of a battle-ravaged city. The final scene features a squad carefully making their way across a rice paddy.

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Victorious American soldiers post a sign renaming Hindenburgstrasse to Wilson U.S.A. in Vigneulles, France, in 1918. U.S. Signal Corps photo

strong and dangerous Germany, to revenge and to the shifting by the victors of their unbearable financial burdens onto the shoulders of the defeated,” John Maynard Keynes lamented. “Nations have no right to use peace treaties to punish the children of their enemies.” Germany made its final World War I debt payment in 2010.

Wilson envisioned a world “made safe for democracy.” Yet as historians Felix Gilbert and David Clay Large note, “After 15 years, with the exception of Czechoslovakia, not one of the states created or reorganized at the Paris Peace Conference remained a democracy.” And some pieces of postwar Europe – Soviet Russia, Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy – became virulently anti-democratic.

The term “postwar” is itself an irony. After all, the “war to end wars” did the very opposite. World War II was a continuation of World War I, and so the adjective “postwar” was soon replaced by “interwar.”

The war was romanticized when the guns thundered to life in August 1914, but those who survived the trenches realized that the Great War was more apocalyptic than romantic. Like Revelation’s

four horsemen, it brought conflict (28 nations were engaged), famine (Belgium starved, Germany survived on turnips, Austria’s cities went hungry), death (10 million soldiers and 6 million civilians died) and pestilence (the 1918-1919 influenza pandemic claimed 50 million lives).

CLARITY AND STRENGTH

We can virtually plot recent U.S. military interventions – and many of today’s hottest hot spots – by glancing at the maps drawn after the Great War.

The postwar creation known as Yugoslavia was “a miniature empire run by the Serbs,” historian Paul Johnson writes. From the very beginning, these “south Slavs” – some Catholic, some Muslim, some Orthodox – did not get along. But they remained glued together until 1992, when Yugoslavia finally came undone. The wars that dismembered Yugoslavia – now seven countries – claimed some 250,000 lives.

The League of Nations entrusted much of the Ottoman Empire’s wreckage to Britain and France. They would haphazardly stitch together or tear apart ethno-religious groupings that should have been

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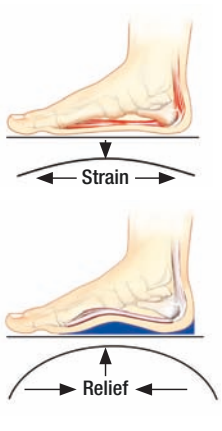
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handled with more care – Kurds, Shiites and Sunnis crammed together in Iraq and Syria; Lebanon separated from Syria; dangled promises of a Jewish homeland in the middle of an Arab-dominated Palestine. Not surprisingly, the region has barely seen a moment's peace. Iraq has made war against four of its neighbors, prompting repeated U.S. intervention. There have been four major Arab-Israeli wars, two intifada uprisings, and brutal civil wars in Lebanon, Iraq and Syria. Lebanon's civil war claimed 120,000 lives, Syria's 150,000 (and counting), and Iraq's Sunni-Shiite war 825 per month (and counting).

As to some of the war's lessons, a common refrain is that Europe's arms race triggered World War I. If this were true, then a) there shouldn't have been a World War II, since the Allies allowed their arsenals to atrophy after World War I, and b) there should have been a World War III, since the United States and the Soviet Union engaged in an unprecedented arms race.

The reality is that miscalculation lit the fuse of World War I. The antidote, as we have learned in the intervening century, is clarity plus strength.

Arms alone aren't enough to deter war. After all, the great powers were armed to the teeth in 1914. But since they weren't clear about their treaty commitments, a small crisis on the fringes of Europe mushroomed into a global war. Nor is clarity alone enough to deter war. After all, Wilson's words to the Kaiser were clear, but America lacked deterrent military strength.

HISTORY AND HOPE

The men who crafted the West's post-World War II blueprint applied the clarity-plus-strength model to prevent the Cold War from turning hot. It remains to

be seen whether the world will follow their example in what may be today's equivalent of prewar Europe: the Asia-Pacific region.

As before, a rising authoritarian power feels hemmed in and entitled, strategic uncertainties abound, territorial claims remain unsettled, the scope of treaty commitments is uncertain, military arsenals are swelling, and trade is booming. Total Japan-China trade is \$334 billion annually; U.S.-China trade is \$562 billion annually.

Still, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe sees his nation and China in a "similar situation" to Britain and Germany on the eve of World War I. Kevin Rudd, former prime minister of Australia, draws parallels to prewar Europe in the South China Sea – a region "riven by overlapping alliances, loyalties and hatreds," and simmering with a mix of "primitive ... nationalisms" and "great-power politics." All the while, U.S. defense spending is ebbing to levels not seen since the interwar years.

We can hope that America has enough residual muscle to maintain the balance and begins to speak with sufficient clarity to prevent miscalculation, and that trade ties prevent a great war in the Pacific. But Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Martin Dempsey expects "the risk of interstate conflict in East Asia to rise." And historian Robert Kagan ominously warns, "History has not been kind to the theory that strong trade ties prevent conflict among nations. The United States and China are no more dependent on each other's economies today than were Great Britain and Germany before World War I." 🌿

Alan W. Dowd is a contributing editor for The American Legion Magazine.



THE GREAT WAR'S CENTENNIAL BEGINS

James Whitfield of Independence, Mo., represents The American Legion on the 12-member United States World War One Centennial Commission.

A World War II Navy veteran, Whitfield is a member of Matthews-Crawford Post 131 in Warrensburg, Mo. He has served in various American Legion post, district, department and national offices.

Passed by Congress and signed by President Barack Obama in 2013, Public Law 112-272 charges the commission with:

- Planning, developing and executing

programs, projects and activities to commemorate the war's centennial.

- Encouraging private organizations and state and local governments to organize and participate in commemoration activities.
- Serving as a clearinghouse for the collection and dissemination of information about centennial events and plans.
- Developing recommendations for Congress and the president for commemorating the centennial.

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The Un-United Kingdom

Will the Scots stick with the British or declare themselves an independent nation?

BY BEN BARBER

IT WAS ONCE SAID that the sun never set on the British Empire, which at its zenith stretched from North America to Calcutta to Hong Kong. How times have changed, as Britain now faces the possible loss of its closest cousin: Scotland.

After more than 300 years of union with England and Wales, a strong push for Scottish independence will culminate at the ballot box on Sept. 18.

Quite unlike the bloody medieval battles portrayed in “Braveheart,” a film that glorified Scottish valor and inspired the separatist movement, this split would for the most part be peaceful. While campaigning for a “no” vote on separation, the British government in London has agreed to respect the outcome of the referendum.

In May, an ICM poll showed that 34 percent of Scots desire independence while 46 percent are opposed. (Anyone living in Scotland, no matter their citizenship, may vote; Scots in England or elsewhere may not.)

Yet an Ipsos MORI Scotland poll in March

reported that “significant numbers of Scots remain undecided ... It is therefore difficult to predict the outcome.”

*From every angle I look, the British are through /
I wait for bonnie Scotland to give me her hand /
And we'll walk towards the sunrise of an
independent land*

IN A CROWDED HIGHLANDS PUB, Scottish folk singer Davy Holt plays his guitar, voicing a sentiment shared by many of Scotland's 5 million people. Long have they felt that the English – with a population 10 times their size – see the Scots as country bumpkins rather than equal partners in Great Britain. With centuries of clan fighting as their legacy, the only profession at which the Scots were thought to excel was war. Scottish troops received numerous medals in British wars and fought bravely alongside English and U.S. forces in World War II, Iraq and Afghanistan.



Though some Scots fret over the economic and social consequences of going it alone, nationalism and pride are running hot. Separatists say the Scots would enjoy the income from North Sea oil and gas flowing directly to London, allowing them to create a Scandinavian-style social welfare state. Scots have a hawkish tradition as warriors, documented by former U.S. Sen. James Webb in his book “Born Fighting.” But politically they tend to be liberal to socialist, favoring free child care and university education, taxing the rich to lift up the poor and greater public ownership of industry.

Nicola Sturgeon, deputy leader of the Scottish National Party (SNP) – which favors independence and currently holds a majority in the Scottish Parliament – recently told the *Telegraph* that a free Scotland would include child care, unleashing a wave of women into the workforce. The SNP also opposes moves by London’s conservative government to privatize the Royal Mail, reduce taxes and cut social spending to promote a pro-business environment.

The British government is eager to keep Scotland in the fold; its “Better Together” public relations

campaign has raised the specter of financial ruin and ill Scots being turned away from British hospitals. But one thing is certain: Britain takes seriously the possibility of a separatist victory.

To calm financial tremors, U.K. officials said in January that Britain will stand behind the entire \$2.2 trillion British national debt, whether or not an independent Scotland pays its share. It’s not even clear how the debt could be divided after centuries of the two peoples sharing currency, trade, defense, labor and everything else.

Scotland’s separation would be the biggest earthquake in European politics in decades, amid fears that separatists will split Belgium’s Dutch- and French-speaking areas and divide Catalonia from Spain. The continent has fresh memories of Yugoslavia’s bloody breakup into seven smaller countries. Hundreds of thousands died in Bosnia, Kosovo, Serbia and Croatia.

But an English-Scottish breakup would be a civilized affair, akin to the “velvet divorce” that split Czechoslovakia in 1991. A Czech university professor I’ve known for years told me that because the Czech Republic and Slovakia both joined the



Alex Salmond and Nicola Sturgeon, leaders of the Scottish National Party, stroll in front of a sign outside Parliament in Edinburgh indicating the date of Scotland's independence referendum. David Moir/Reuters

European Union, the divorce was not significant. Travel, trade, labor standards and even taxes are handled by the EU.

The Scots have already been running education, health and other social services for a decade. In 1997, British Prime Minister Tony Blair – himself a Scot – got the ball rolling by allowing Scotland to vote on whether to re-create a parliament that existed prior to the 1707 union with England.

The move toward autonomy or devolution was aimed at undercutting separatists. But it boomeranged and instead convinced Scots that they have done well on their own and should simply take the next step to full independence.

LAST NOVEMBER, the Scottish government unveiled a 670-page blueprint for secession and independence. Among its pledges:

- Scotland would keep the British pound.
- By 2024, all children 1 and older would receive state-funded child care.
- Scotland would remain part of the EU.
- British nuclear-powered and armed Trident submarines would be removed from Scottish waters of the River Clyde by 2020.
- There would be no border checks with England.

It is unclear how independence would affect the United States, where a 2009 U.S. Community Census found that 6.8 million Americans claim

direct Scottish ancestry and 27.5 million claim some Scottish heritage. The majority live in southern states, including North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, Kentucky and Tennessee.

Alex Salmond, Scotland's first minister, attends parades for Scotland Week in several U.S. cities every year. He likes to point out that Scots played a big role in the Declaration of Independence; an estimated third of its signatories were either Scots by birth or of Scottish descent.

Scottish-Americans and others provide a massive income stream through tourism, says Scott Macnab, senior political journalist at the Edinburgh newspaper *The Scotsman*.

"The diaspora is big, a huge influence," Macnab told me over coffee in the modern Parliament building, just across the street from Holyrood Palace, the 800-year-old official Scottish residence of Queen Elizabeth (who would be retained as monarch by an independent Scotland).

Besides tourism, the Scottish economy's mainstays are whiskey, pharmaceuticals, oil and gas.

Still, an independent Scotland would have to figure out what to do with thousands of its soldiers in the British armed forces. If they all returned home to join the new Scottish army, it might break the military budget, raising the possibility that each would have to decide where to serve.

Last winter, I spoke with a Scottish soldier who

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had just returned from serving two years in Afghanistan. He doubts many Scots in the British army would join a new militia-type Scottish force. It would be a downgrade from the large British army with its helicopters, fighters, missiles, ships and chance for promotion, he said.

If Scotland disposes of the nuclear weapons on its territory, NATO could deny it membership as a separate state, Macnab warns. But he noted that “lots of military ships go north of Scotland between Iceland and the Arctic. Recently, Russian ships went into Scottish water due to bad weather, but some thought it was to test our reaction time. It shows the strategic importance of Scotland.”

Another concern is that Britain may no longer build its warships on the River Clyde. By canceling a contract for two new aircraft carriers and a new generation of frigates, many good jobs would be eliminated.

WHEN I VISITED the northern city of Inverness, I heard a British civil servant discussing the issue of independence with a Scottish woman managing a downtown shop. Harris Tweed jackets hung on the racks, and visitors sorted through traditional scarves and wool throws woven in clan patterns.

“Doesn’t every Scot feel in his or her heart a longing for independence?” he asked.

“Yes,” the woman quietly responded. “I will also vote for independence.”

In 2013, Scottish-born Andy Murray won the Wimbledon tennis championship – the first such victory by a Brit in more than 70 years. British Prime Minister David Cameron was seen on TV applauding the victory. But just behind him in the stands, Salmond unfurled the Saltire – the blue-and-white Scottish flag. This was seen as an insult, a challenge and another effort to insert celebrities into the political issue of independence. Sir Sean Connery has not been vocal in recent years, but the actor was a leading voice in the push for independence a decade ago.

In London, the three major political parties have been united in opposing Scotland’s independence and launched the “Better Together” campaign to persuade the Scots not to leave.

Together they pose tough questions, particularly on health care. Would Scots retain access to the British national medical system? Would Scots having heart attacks be prevented from crossing the border to seek help?

Security is also an issue. An independent Scotland wouldn’t have many soldier jobs but would instead need ships and planes to patrol the

increasingly busy Arctic region as warmer temperatures open it to navigation.

There’s also education. With a more leftist inclination than England, Scotland has kept its acclaimed university education free even as the rest of Britain installed U.S.-style annual fees approaching \$9,000 a year. Will English students be ousted from Scottish schools, and will Scottish students in England be charged the higher rates paid by foreigners?

The “Better Together” campaign implied that Scottish cellphones would be charged roaming fees inside England, or charged to call English numbers, if Scotland went independent. The phone companies later denied it. But the backlash against the scare campaign may push many toward supporting independence.

Finally, Salmond muddied the waters by saying he wants to keep the British pound as the currency for a free Scotland. This would allow the Bank of England to make critical decisions affecting interest rates and currency supply, with major consequences for Scotland.

WHEN THE COLD WAR ENDED nearly 25 years ago, some spoke of the “end of history” – an ideological triumph of capitalism and globalization over socialism and isolated nation-states. That proved illusory. Instead, the past quarter-century has been punctuated, if not plagued, by a series of ethnic and religious conflicts leading to splintering of multi-ethnic societies.

Quebec nearly split from Canada in 1995. Slovakia left the Czechs. Yugoslavia broke into Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. Russia lost its Baltic states as well as the Central Asian “Stans.” The Kurds, the Palestinians, the Tutsis and various groups in Ivory Coast, Nigeria, the western Sahara, Catalonia, Chechnya, western China, South Sudan and Senegal press on in their struggles for independence.

Scotland seems so advanced that we can feel assured a vote to secede would not be followed by a violent transition. Even so, the dreams and ideas of the Scottish people are deeply felt. As Macnab told me in the Parliament lounge, “We’ve been running everything since 1999: health, education, services. And it’s all going pretty well. Why not go for the whole thing, independence?” 🌿

Ben Barber has been a journalist for more than 30 years. His latest book is “GROUNDTRUTH: Work, Play and Conflict in the Third World.”

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LAST of the CODE TALKERS

In his final interview, World War II Marine Chester Nez reflected on his place in history.

BY HENRY HOWARD

Editor's note: The American Legion interviewed Chester Nez, last of the original 29 Navajo Code Talkers, 10 days before he died.

As the Pacific theater of World War II darkened, the United States searched for ways to keep its military messages secret. The Japanese had broken every code. In so doing, they were exacting heavy damage in both troop numbers and morale.

Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, civilian Philip Johnston proposed using the little-known Navajo language to transmit confidential communications. Marine Corps officers were skeptical but gave the go-ahead to test the concept, a decision that proved instrumental for victory in the Pacific.

The incredibly precise Navajo language was an ideal way to mask a code. With elaborate syntax, grammar and tones, it could easily throw off a nonspeaker trying to listen in. Only about 30 non-Navajos understood the language at all, and it did not appear in books.

When the mission was declassified long after the war, the Japanese acknowledged the success of the Navajo Code Talkers. "If the Japanese Imperial Intelligence Team could have decoded the Navajo messages, the outcome of the battles on Saipan and Iwo Jima might have been different; the history of the Pacific war might have turned out completely different," according to the *Fuji Evening News* in Tokyo.

Long before Marines famously planted a U.S. flag on Iwo Jima, actual Navajos had to be recruited to create and transmit the code.

"Either you want to go, or you don't want to go. I said, 'I'll go,'" Chester Nez explained in his final interview, raising his hand for emphasis. His 2011 memoir, "Code Talker," co-authored by Judith Avila, offers a firsthand window into this chapter of World War II history.

'WE ARE WARRIORS' The Marines selected Nez and 28 other young Navajo men to serve as the original 29 code talkers. They had never left their reservations in the southwestern United

States except to attend boarding schools. Ironically, the strict English-only rule made possible their selection, as the Marines needed bilingual Navajos.

Life had been difficult but traditional growing up for Nez – whose clan name was Dibé Lizhiní, or Black Sheep – on the Checkerboard area of the Navajo Reservation in New Mexico. The summers were brutally hot, winters brutally cold. Elders in his tight-knit family taught Nez and his siblings about the Navajo tradition of the "Right Way," which he describes in his book as a "balance between individuals, but also between each person and his world."

In 1941, the reservation's slow, quiet tempo was a stark contrast to a world at war. Young Nez realized almost immediately that he'd be called upon. "Our country has joined the war," he said in his book, recalling a conversation with his friend and future code talker Roy Begay. "I think the military will want us. We are warriors."

When Nez and the others were recruited to be code talkers, they were not told of their future mission. After basic training, they were sent to a secured room at Camp Elliott, near San Diego, and given their assignment: create an unbreakable code using your native tongue.

Thus began the work of the all-Navajo 382nd Marine Platoon.

The men agreed to devise a twice-encrypted code, using an English word (usually a common word for an animal or plant) to represent each letter of English. Those words would then be translated into Navajo, and the Navajo word would represent the English letter. All subscribers to the "Right Way" belief, they created and executed flawless codes for Marine officers and were given the green light to expand the mission.

Watch the Chester Nez video online:
 www.legion.org/magazine



Photo by Lucas Carter

Nez and other Navajo Marines then went to Guadalcanal, where they landed on beaches, braved enemy fire and sent secret messages from the battlefield.

Using a walkie-talkie, one team member would send messages in Navajo to a code talker on the other end. "It is very, very dangerous when you are sending that code," said 93-year-old Nez, who was a special guest at American Legion Memorial Day events in Kansas last May. "They are shooting at you, and you had to be like a jack rabbit."

He easily recalled the first code he sent: "*Beh-na-ali-tsosie a-knah-as-donih ah-toh nish-na-jih-goh dah-di-kad ah-deel-tahi.*" Translation: "Enemy machine gun nest on your right flank. Destroy."

The code talkers were not just sending and translating messages with their 30-pound machines. They were in the heart of the battle, translating orders while finding cover.

"Bullets (were) flying all over," Nez recalled. "Hand grenades, too. It's a very difficult story to talk about. Some of my best friends got shot, shot down. It's something that you never forget. Sometimes it almost makes you cry when you see a real close buddy get shot. I was very lucky to come through the combat."

Faith played a major role for Nez and the others in battle. Once the families at home learned the young men were Marines, they prayed for them several times each day. Even overseas, the code talkers felt connected.

"Chester told me during our interviews that when he was in a battle, he could hear the sheep bells," Avila says. "He could physically hear them. And so could the other men. And they knew that when they heard the sheep bells, they knew their families were praying for them."

A PROUD NATION Nez also served at Bougainville, Guam, Peleliu and Angaur, where he and the other code talkers continued to pass along secret messages, fight the enemy and long for home.

After Nez was discharged, he traveled to his serene homeland – a far cry from the jubilant homecomings in major cities that welcomed other troops home. He arrived in Gallup, N.M., by bus, then hitchhiked toward the reservation, where he reunited with his father, siblings and grandmother. (His mother died at a young age.)

But when Nez and other code talkers returned home, they could not tell anyone what they had done, in the event they would be called upon again. "Everything was strictly secret," he said.

Finally in 1968, the silence was broken when the

mission was declassified. "They (family members) were very, very excited, very proud that the Marines chose the Navajo as the code talker language," Nez said.

In 2000, President Bill Clinton signed a bill honoring the code talkers. The next year, President George W. Bush personally presented the Congressional Gold Medal to the survivors. Each accepted the medal and shook Bush's hand – including Nez, who also saluted the commander in chief.

ALWAYS A MARINE Nez lived his life with two mantras: the "Right Way" of the Navajo and the Marine Corps' *Semper Fidelis*. He finished high school and later received a degree in fine arts from the University of Kansas. He served in the Korean War as a Marine Corps reservist before raising a family and working at the VA medical center in Albuquerque, N.M., where he retired in 1974.

The last of the original code talkers, Nez traveled with his grandson, Latham, and Avila to tout his memoir and share the group's legacy. His last public event was sponsored by American Legion Frontenac Post 43 in Pittsburg, Kan., in May.

By that time, much of Nez's physical strength was gone. The years had taken his hearing; diabetes had claimed both of his legs several years earlier. Even in his final days, however, his mind was as sharp as his character, which was shaped by his tribal and military families alike.

In Navajo, "always faithful" means that you love and support everything that America stands for, he said. "I am very proud to be one of those people who helped out during World War II."

His pride was evident, and his voice noticeably rose and became clearer when he talked about today's Marines. During the Legion's interview, Nez gave a final order, in English:

"All you Marines out there, wherever you are: Come home in one piece. As Cpl. Chester Nez, I say to you guys that are out there: *Semper Fidelis*. Take care and come home." 🌿

Ten days after this interview, Nez died of kidney failure at his home in Albuquerque. Family members, the Navajo Hopi Honor Guard, Marine Corps representatives, veterans and others gathered at the city June 10 to pay their respects. After the funeral Mass, a 2-mile-long cortege proceeded 55 miles to the national cemetery in Santa Fe, where Nez was buried in Marine dress blues.

Henry Howard is deputy director of magazine operations for The American Legion.

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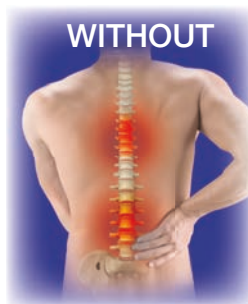
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Getty Images

FOREIGN-BORN AMERICAN HEROES

Not all recipients of our highest military honor have been U.S. natives.

BY AL MANCHESTER

In July 1950, Cpl. Tibor Rubin of the 8th Cavalry staged a one-man rearguard on a hill while the rest of his outfit pulled back toward Pusan, South Korea. As the citation for his Medal of Honor reads, he “inflicted a staggering number of casualties on the attacking force during his personal 24-hour battle, singlehandedly slowing the enemy advance and allowing the 8th Cavalry Regiment to complete its withdrawal.” Born in Hungary, Rubin was a survivor of Holocaust concentration camps that had taken most of his immediate family.

It comes as a surprise to some Americans that many Medal of Honor recipients are foreign-born. They came from far away, responded to America’s call to arms, and events placed them in dangerous circumstances where somebody had to take control. Their responses were immediate and selfless.

On Aug. 9, 1918, the 131st Infantry Regiment, 33rd Division, attacked Chipilly Ridge in France between two British units. The Yanks went over with little artillery support, into the face of deadly artillery and machine-gun fire. When the two sergeants and lieutenant in Cpl. Jake Alex’s platoon were wounded, he raised his hand and shouted for survivors to follow him. And when they were held up by a machine-gun nest, Alex continued the attack alone.

Jake Alex was originally Aleksa Mandusic, born in Turkish-dominated Serbia in 1887. He had

immigrated to the United States to avoid service in the Turkish army fighting fellow Serbs. He was 6 feet tall, weighed about 220 pounds, and after years of work in U.S. meatpacking plants and along railroads, he was enormously strong. He lobbed three hand grenades at the machine-gun nest and then jumped in with fixed bayonet. When the bayonet broke, he continued to fight with the butt of his rifle. By the time the German position was indisputably his, he had killed five and captured 15. Besides the Medal of Honor, his

decorations include British, French and Italian medals. His Victory Medal held four battle clasps.

A Finn with a shotgun, Johannes S. Anderson, silenced a machine gun and brought in 23 prisoners. Marine Corps Sgts. Louis Cukela and Matej Kocak, both born in the Austria-Hungary area, were awarded their medals for action in the same general area on the same day: July 18, 1918.

A Dutchman, Sgt. Ludovicus M.M. Van Iersel, had a busy war. In 1917, he helped rescue British seamen when their ship

was torpedoed in heavy seas. He earned his Medal of Honor for crossing a wrecked bridge under fire to reconnoiter German positions on the other side.

Moored just off Ford Island on Dec. 7, 1941, USS *Utah* made an irresistible target for Japanese pilots, who put two torpedoes into it. The ship quickly flooded and began to capsize. Below decks, Chief Watertender Peter Tomich kept vital machinery



Congressional Medal of Honor Society
Chief Watertender Peter Tomich, World War II

working while he secured the boilers. Realizing the ship's fate, he stayed at his post to evacuate personnel. When *Utah* capsized and sank, Tomich went down with it. His Medal of Honor was on display at the Navy's Senior Enlisted Academy until 2006, when it was presented to his family on board USS *Enterprise* at Split, Croatia. Tomich had



Congressional Medal of Honor Society

Staff Sgt. Isadore Jachman, World War II

served in the Navy since 1919 and was an Army veteran of World War I. The wreck of *Utah* is still visible and is considered a war grave.

Among the Medals of Honor awarded to foreign-born men for service in World War II is that of Isadore Jachman, born in Berlin in 1922. He lost many relatives in the Holocaust, including six

aunts and uncles.

On Jan. 4, 1945, Staff Sgt. Jachman was with the 513th Parachute Infantry Regiment at Flamierge, Belgium, where his unit took heavy fire when two German tanks attacked their position. Taking a bazooka from a fallen comrade, Jachman engaged the tanks, disabling one and forcing both to pull out. He was mortally wounded during the battle. Flamierge later built a monument to honor the soldier who stood alone against tanks. His Medal of Honor is now displayed in the National Museum of American Jewish Military History.

Pedro Cano was among the World War II Medal of Honor recipients to survive the war. His family received his medal March 18, when President Barack Obama awarded 24 Medals of Honor to men – some posthumously – for acts of valor in World War II, Korea and Vietnam.



Congressional Medal of Honor Society

Pvt. Pedro Cano, World War II

In December 1944, Pvt. Cano was with the 8th Infantry Regiment, 4th Division, as it fought through the Hürtgen Forest. When his company

became tied down by machine-gun fire, Cano advanced alone with a bazooka and wiped out the two enemy emplacements holding them up. He then knocked out two more machine-gun nests that had stopped another U.S. unit. The next day,



Congressional Medal of Honor Society

Sgt. Leslie Sabo Jr., Vietnam War

he eliminated three more nests. Later on, when his platoon was ambushed, he threw a grenade that killed or wounded all the German soldiers closing in on them.

The Medal of Honor recommendation for Vietnam War recipient Leslie Sabo Jr. was lost until 1999. Sabo was Hungarian, born in

Austria in 1948. On May 10, 1970, he was serving in Cambodia with the 101st Airborne. During what came to be known as the “Mother’s Day ambush,” Sabo protected the wounded, gathered ammunition from fallen men and provided covering fire for incoming helicopters. Already wounded, he was killed when he crawled forward to knock out an enemy bunker. Obama awarded Sgt. Sabo’s medal to his widow May 16, 2012.

The 24 Medals of Honor awarded at the White House in March went to men who might have been overlooked because of ethnicity or religion. In fact, Cano may have been overlooked because he was not a U.S. citizen in 1945. Regardless, the nation holds these selfless and brave warriors in the deepest esteem, no matter their ethnicity, religion or country of origin. 🌿

Al Manchester is a writer and photographer living in New Mexico.

Beyond the call of duty

The original Medal of Honor was established by Congress on July 12, 1862. The defining phrase from the 1862 act states that the medal would be presented “to such non-commissioned officers and privates as shall most distinguish themselves by their gallantry in action, and other soldier-like qualities” This act prevailed until 1918.

Congress approved the following act on July 9, 1918: “The President is authorized to present, in the name of Congress, a medal of honor only to each person who, while an officer or enlisted man of the Army, shall hereafter, in action involving actual conflict with an enemy, distinguish himself conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty.”

That last phrase distinguishes the Medal of Honor from all other U.S. medals awarded for valor.



Since the founding of Gold Star Mothers, Inc., in 1929, The American Legion has been a strong supporter by conducting Gold Star ceremonies and passing resolutions. During its Spring Meetings in May, the National Executive Committee passed Resolution No. 22 to ensure that American Legion departments support the criteria established for the issuance of both Gold Star and Next of Kin of Deceased Personnel lapel buttons, and to provide public awareness of the significance of the two before and during Gold Star Banner ceremonies.

The Gold Star lapel button is presented to surviving family members of servicemembers who lost their lives in combat. The Next of Kin of Deceased Personnel lapel button is presented to the primary next of kin of servicemembers who lost their lives while serving on active duty, not in a combat zone, or while assigned in an Army Reserve or Army National Guard unit in a drill status. Both lapel buttons are acquired and presented by the U.S. Department of Defense.



Gold Star son honored for paying it forward

Myles Eckert found a \$20 bill in the parking lot of a Cracker Barrel, wrapped it in a note and handed it to an Air National Guardsman dining with his family inside. The note read, in part, “My dad was a soldier. He’s in heaven now. We like to pay it forward in my family. It’s your lucky day! Thank you for your service.”

Paying it forward to servicemembers makes the 9-year-old Gold Star son from Waterville, Ohio, “happy, happy, happy,” he says, “because it reminds me of my dad.”

His heart-tugging story aired on CBS Evening News and whipped up a wave of social media buzz.

Army Sgt. Gary Eckert was killed in Iraq in 2005, when Myles was four weeks old. The boy says he feels “like the spirit of my dad is in me” when he wears his father’s dog tags and wedding ring around his neck, which he did May 16 when the American Legion Family of Ohio honored him alongside his mother Tiffany and 10-year-old sister Marlee during the 51st Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Ohio Convention.

“In one instant, a young man personified everything our organization is about: paying it forward to veterans,” said Jason Graven, the Department of Ohio’s internal affairs director.

Myles received an honorary lifetime SAL membership to Squadron 587 in Toledo, Ohio, and a \$5,000 donation was made in his name to the Folds of Honor Foundation. He also received other gifts, including a plaque from American Legion National Commander Dan Dellinger.

“They say integrity is doing the right thing when nobody is looking,” SAL National Commander Joe Gladden said when recognizing Myles. “That’s what you did that day.”

As for the boy, the sight of a soldier always brings his dad to mind. “You should respect soldiers every day,” he said.

– Cameran Richardson



Watch the CBS Evening News video online:
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TROOP SUPPORT

Antique tractor owners raise funds for OCW

A group of antique tractor owners, meandering across Nebraska at 12 mph, collected and donated \$4,300 for The American Legion's Operation Comfort Warriors (OCW) program in early June.

More than 160 farmers participated in at least one segment of the nine-day, 425-mile Tractor Relay Across Nebraska. This was the third year for the event but its first time as a fundraiser. OCW was selected as the beneficiary.

"There are a lot of veterans in our association or people with family members in the military, so this seemed like an appropriate donation," said relay coordinator Donelle Moormeier of Cortland, Neb. "OCW is a very good cause and something that we would like to support because of all that our veterans do for us."

The farmers appreciated the fact that 100 percent of donations to OCW go toward gifts or recreational activities for wounded servicemembers and their family members.

"It was very important for us to know this money was

going to the vets and their families," said Moormeier, who drove the entire route with a U.S. flag displayed on her 1966 International Harvester tractor.

Indeed, the fundraising efforts had greater results than the group anticipated. "Sometimes you don't think people are interested in veterans," she said. "It reaffirmed my faith in the people of Nebraska. They do appreciate what the veterans and the military do for us. Everybody in the towns welcomed us and were happy we were driving for OCW."

Throughout the event, American Legion posts and other community organizations welcomed, fed and cheered the farmers. On the seventh day, Post 203 in McCook sponsored a community cookout in a park to welcome the farmers and solicit OCW donations.

"Just having a hand in this makes me proud to be able to help our young servicemen and women," said Dan Stramel, commander of Post 203 and a retired Marine. "It's an honor to help provide the dollars needed for comfort items for their relaxation."

World War II veteran Wendell Argotsinger was one of 10 or so farmers who traveled the entire route. "OCW sounds like a wonderful cause," said Argotsinger, 86, of Denison, Iowa. "I hope they continue to get some more donations."

Moormeier is optimistic that future tractor rallies will choose OCW. To her, the program is important because of who it helps, as illustrated by a conversation she had midway through the event.



Nebraska Department Commander Dave Bruckner welcomes the relay drivers. Photo by Gregory Blobaum

60 miles

Longest one-day stretch of the tractor relay

75 years

Age of the oldest tractor driven in the relay

167

Number of registered farmers who drove in the tractor relay

\$1,000

Amount given by an anonymous donor in McCook

\$4,300

Total raised in donations to OCW



TOP: Farmers drive antique tractors in the third annual Tractor Relay Across Nebraska, which chose the Legion's Operation Comfort Warriors program as its charity.

ABOVE: The tractors generally hit 12 mph during the ride across Nebraska, covering up to 60 miles per day. Photos by Lucas Carter

"The other night in Alma, one gal said, 'I just have to thank you. My husband is a vet, and you don't know how important this is to us.'"

— Henry Howard

Go online to see a video about the tractor rally, learn more about OCW or make a donation:

 www.legion.org/ocw

TROOP SUPPORT

Dellinger visits Fort Knox, brings OCW gift

National Commander Dan Dellinger traveled to Fort Knox, Ky., on April 30, where he presented a theater-sized industrial popcorn maker and accessories to the Warrior Transition Battalion (WTB), courtesy of The American Legion's Operation Comfort Warriors program.

About 330 wounded, injured or ill troops and their families access the Soldier and Family Assistance Center (SFAC), where the donation will be used.

"Without funding, we are at the mercy of our donors," says Isadora Ewing, Fort Knox SFAC director. "The American Legion has really poured its heart out. Popcorn is one of the snacks we like to offer soldiers, spouses and their children."

The donation is the latest in a series of morale-boosting gifts and recreational equipment OCW has provided to Fort Knox in recent years. Dellinger assured officials that the support will continue.

Meanwhile, the Kentucky American Legion is converting the St. George House, the base's former VIP quarters, to a lodge where family members can stay while visiting loved ones assigned to the WTB.

"There is no Fisher House here," says Peter Trzop, the department's public relations and legislative director. "The St. George House was being used primarily for storage and was scheduled for demolition. We've been raising funds, including a \$5,500 grant from Home Depot, to provide a place for visiting families to stay at no cost to them. We hope to have it completed this year."

Despite the support of The American Legion and other organizations, Brig. Gen. Peggy Combs – the first female commander at Fort Knox – concedes that defense cuts will take a toll on the military community.

"You have to pay the piper at the same time (we have to) optimize the fleet," says Combs, a member of Post 1448 in Oriskany, N.Y. "Some soldier and family programs will be hurt. We have to look at what's essential."

In the meantime, "just keep helping our veterans," she told Dellinger. "We stand on the shoulders of giants."

— John Raughter



Tom Stratman



HONOR & REMEMBRANCE

The Eyes of Freedom

Initially, Marine Corps veteran Mike Strahle had a hard time looking at the life-size portraits honoring 23 men he served alongside in Iraq. Now he escorts the exhibit – called the “Eyes of Freedom” memorial – around the country, serving alongside his men again.

Ohio-based Lima Company, 3rd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment – once known as “Lucky Lima” – lost 22 Marines and a Navy corpsman in 2005 to IEDs and enemy fire.

Through a dream, Ohio artist Anita Miller was inspired to paint the fallen men, and the eight portraits – each 8.5 feet tall and 6 feet wide – were unveiled at the Ohio Statehouse on Memorial Day 2008.

“It’s sad and it’s going to make people angry,” says Strahle, the memorial’s director. “But the main objective is for them to go through all the emotions and come out walking taller and more aware, more proud, of what our servicemen and women have done to protect us.”

In May, the American Legion Department of Indiana and Indiana Funeral Care brought the Eyes of Freedom to Greenwood for three days. Departments and posts can partner with other community groups to host the memorial, and Legion Riders often escort it. The paintings travel in a freight truck provided by R+L Carriers of Wilmington, Ohio.

Since 2011, the Eyes of Freedom has visited 15 states.

A pair of each fallen warrior’s boots sits beneath his image, along with a candle. “The burning candles signify that the 22 Marines and the Navy corpsman live on,” Strahle says. Visitors are encouraged to leave notes or mementos in the boots for the men’s families.

“I have the best job ever,” he continues. “I’m still connected with my men. When veterans from all eras come to the exhibit, they are standing in front of my men, but they are seeing the guys they served with. It’s very healing.”

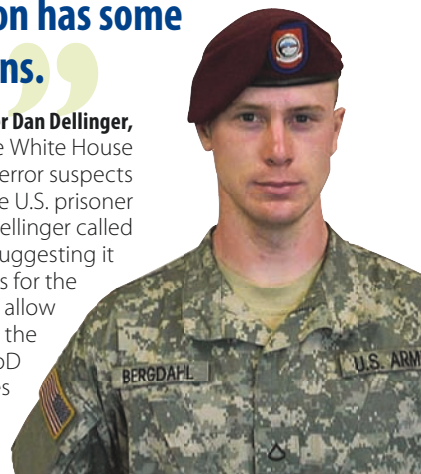
To ask about hosting the Eyes of Freedom memorial in your community, visit its website:

 www.limacompanymemorial.org

VERBATIM

To Sgt. Bergdahl, I say, ‘Welcome home. Your family has waited far too long to see you, and we are happy that your five-year nightmare has ended.’ To the administration, I say, The American Legion has some very serious concerns.

National Commander Dan Dellinger, responding to news that the White House swapped five high-value terror suspects at Guantanamo Bay for the sole U.S. prisoner of war in Afghanistan. Dellinger called the deal “troubling,” suggesting it could provide incentives for the kidnapping of Americans and allow the detainees to return to the battlefield. He also urged DoD to review the circumstances surrounding Bergdahl’s initial disappearance.



MILITARY AFFAIRS

Our Pacific assets

330,000 U.S. personnel tasked to the Asia-Pacific theater

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2,000 U.S. aircraft tasked to the Asia-Pacific theater

Source: DoD/Los Angeles Times

MILITARY AFFAIRS

New lease in Djibouti

The United States has signed a 20-year lease on the military base in Djibouti. The tiny country on the Horn of Africa is home to Camp Lemonnier, which has served as a key base in the war on terror since soon after 9/11.

When the Pentagon stood up U.S. operations at the 88-acre base in Djibouti, the commitment consisted of a few hundred Marines and Special Operations forces. Today the base spreads across 500 acres and houses some 4,000 U.S. personnel and civilians, *The New York Times* reports.

Washington will pay Djibouti \$70 million a year for continued access to the base – a significant increase over the previous annual payment of \$30 million.

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NATIONAL CONVENTION

Countdown to Charlotte

Williams to emcee opening ceremony

TV personality, radio host, actor and veteran Montel Williams will open the 96th American Legion National Convention in Charlotte.

Charlotte airport's USO open to delegates

The USO of North Carolina will give American Legion delegates access to the Charlotte Center in the Charlotte Douglas International Airport Aug. 18-31. You must register in advance to use the facilities.

Charlotte Center is located on the upper level of the main atrium above Burger King and can be reached by taking staircases near the First In Flight bar. Elevators are located in terminals A and D.

 uso-nc.org/events/charlotte-center-the-american-legion-national-convention

Training, workshops

The 96th National Convention will offer several workshops covering digital media, the Legion's upcoming 100th Anniversary, the work of the Veterans Employment & Education Division and more. Some require pre-registration, while others are open to walk-ins.

 www.legion.org/convention

National convention app

Download the 2014 National Convention App for quick access to maps of downtown Charlotte, hotel assignments, a list of convention and commission speakers, and a daily news ticker with schedule updates and other information. The app also includes links to Twitter, the National Convention Facebook page and convention headlines.

 www.legion.org/mobileapps

Convention Facebook page

"Like" the 96th National Convention's Facebook page to get the latest information and interact with others planning to attend.

 www.facebook.com/TheAmericanLegionNationalConvention



Steve Pintarich, left, and Tony Coppola of Computer Sciences Corp. were recognized by National Commander Dan Dellinger for donating 1,400 laptops to servicemembers. Photo by Joe DellaPorta

LEGIONNAIRES IN ACTION

Connecticut post helps keep troops connected

A one-time request for four used laptop computers has become a nearly \$600,000 charitable enterprise for deployed and hospitalized U.S. troops and their families.

Back in 2009, Steve Pintarich – an employee of Computer Sciences Corp. (CSC) – requested the computers from his manager. A past commander of Kiltonic Post 72 in Southington, Conn., he explained to his boss, Tony Coppola, that the laptops were needed for a fellow Legionnaire and other Guardsmen to communicate by webcam while deployed to Kuwait.

"It was pretty simple for me," Coppola says. "You have servicemembers risking their lives here and abroad. It pales in comparison to what they do for us."

Because CSC was so supportive, Pintarich asked for more computers. Laptops were shipped to survivors of the COP Keating ambush in Afghanistan, other deployed servicemembers and veterans attending college.

"Every month we deliver about 10 to 20 computers to Walter Reed," Pintarich says. "I figure each computer reaches 20 people. When I hear from a wife that her deployed husband can now see his kids or his baby for the first time – well, you just can't put a price on that."

In five years, more than 1,400 computers have been donated and delivered to troops. With each worth around \$400, total donations have topped \$560,000.

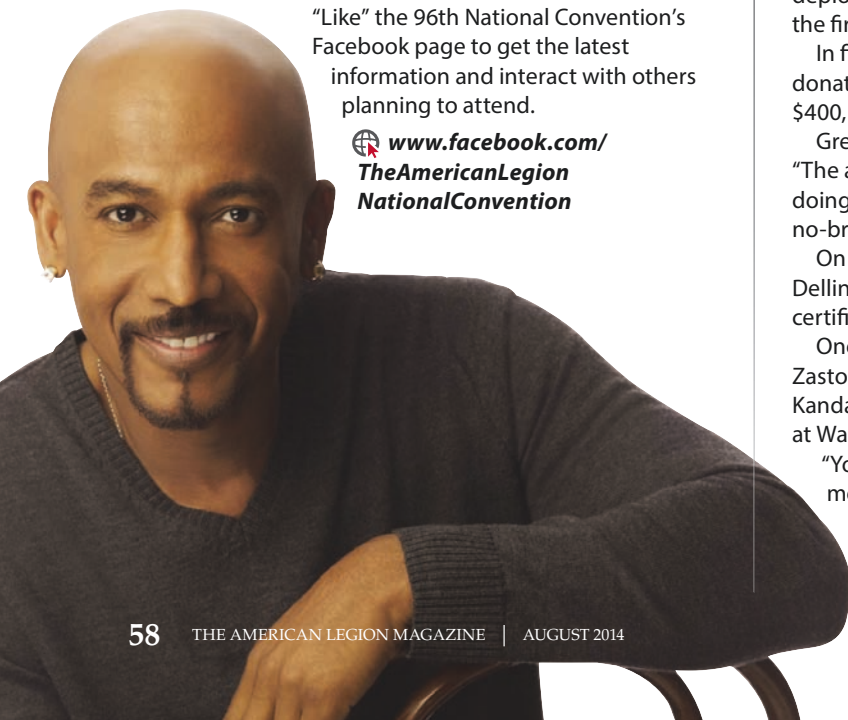
Greg Piazza, account general manager for CSC, agrees. "The amount of good that these computers are now doing veterans vs. the benefit of selling parts makes it a no-brainer," he says.

On a visit to Post 72, National Commander Dan Dellinger recognized Coppola and Pintarich with certificates of appreciation.

One laptop recipient is Army 1st Lt. Thomas Eric Zastoupil, who lost a leg in an IED blast while serving in Kandahar, Afghanistan, in 2012. Zastoupil was recovering at Walter Reed when he sent a letter to CSC.

"Your generous gift of a laptop computer has allowed me to be in touch with my family and friends here, as well as my men back in Afghanistan," he wrote. "Your generous gift has truly made a difference for me."

– John Raughter



ASK A SERVICE OFFICER

What to know about non-Hodgkin lymphoma benefits



Tracy L. Davis
Department Service
Officer, Missouri

Q: *I am a Vietnam War Navy veteran, and years ago I was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin lymphoma. I almost missed out on VA benefits because I didn't know I was eligible.*

A: There is a special rule regarding

non-Hodgkin lymphoma (NHL) that affects Blue Water and other Vietnam War veterans. NHL is a cancer of the lymph glands and other lymphatic tissue. Early signs include swollen, painless lymph nodes in the neck, armpit or groin areas. Other signs may include fever, night sweats, fatigue, weight loss, abdominal pain or swelling, chest pain or trouble breathing, and itchy skin.

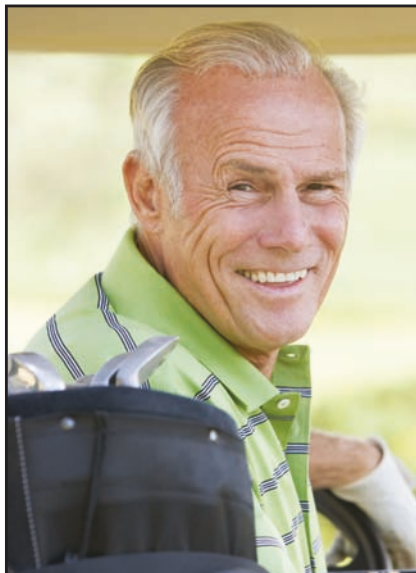
VA presumes that NHL is related to exposure to Agent Orange or other herbicides during military service, service in Vietnam or service in the offshore waters during the Vietnam War era. Veterans with NHL from exposure to Agent Orange or other herbicides may be eligible for disability compensation and VA health care.

Additionally, surviving spouses, dependent children and dependent parents of veterans who were exposed and died as the result of NHL may be eligible for survivors benefits.

If you have any type of Vietnam service, let your doctors know that you may be at higher risk for certain diseases, including NHL. If you don't understand a diagnosis or lab result, ask for an explanation. If you are diagnosed with NHL due to service in Vietnam, speak with a service officer about VA benefits. Find an American Legion service officer in your state:

 www.legion.org/serviceofficers

Do you have a question for Department of Missouri Service Officer Tracy Davis about the claims process or veterans benefits in general? Send it to askso@legion.org.



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J.J. MONTANARO

"The American Legion kicks butt" ... or words to that effect.

That's the message a young woman shared with me about the difficulties she encountered while trying to access her veterans benefits. She told me that an American Legion service officer helped her navigate the process.

That discussion, and a recent survey revealing that less than 20 percent of veterans or their surviving spouses acknowledged receiving any information on VA benefits in the past year, prompted me to explain some of what's available. You've earned the benefits, so you should at least understand what they are.

■ **Veterans pension** This monthly tax-free benefit is available to veterans and survivors with limited means. Eligibility and the available benefit are based on a veteran's income, deductible medical expenses and family status.

■ **Aid & Attendance and Housebound** Those who are eligible for the pension and require assistance to perform daily activities, or who are confined to their homes, may be eligible for increased amounts.

■ **VA home loans** I wrote about this benefit earlier this summer. It's one I've used several times. Being able to buy a home without a down payment and no private mortgage insurance is nice.

■ **Dependency and Indemnity Compensation** I'm surprised at how often I run into surviving spouses who aren't aware of this program. Generally, this tax-free monthly benefit is available to survivors who have lost loved ones from disease or injury while on active duty or as a

result of a service-connected disability. In 2014, the basic monthly rate is \$1,233.

■ **Burial benefits** Eligible veterans can be buried in a national cemetery, and receive a burial flag, military honors and even a headstone or marker for use at any cemetery. There are more than 70 national cemeteries open for interments. Also, in certain situations VA will provide burial or internment allowances.

■ **Home improvements and structural alterations** VA provides benefits of up to \$6,800 to help build ramps, lower sinks and counters or otherwise improve access to homes.

■ **Nursing home care** VA has three main programs to provide nursing home care. You have to be enrolled in the VA system to access them, and priority goes to those with a service-connected disability rating of 70 percent or higher.

■ **Caregiver programs and services** VA has a host of programs to offer care, provide caregiver training and even compensate those who provide care for veterans.

Of course, this is just the beginning in terms of information, but if you or someone you know could benefit from these services, look into them. Go online to www.va.gov, or seek out the help of an American Legion service officer.

In an uncertain world, here's a sure bet: you won't benefit if you don't apply.

J.J. Montanaro is a certified financial planner with USAA, The American Legion's preferred provider of financial services. Submit questions for him online.

www.legion.org/focusonfinances

MY GI BILL

VETERANS & EDUCATION
BY VALERIE HEFFNER

EDUCATION

eBenefits good place for young vets to start

Q: I have to admit that when I was discharged from the Navy two years ago, I did not understand all my benefits. I just wanted to go home. Is there a website that will explain how I can apply for certain benefits?

A: The best website to help you understand and apply for your benefits – education, vocational rehabilitation, home loans or VA payment history – is eBenefits, at www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits-portal. Since you are the veteran, sign up for the premium account. Family members should sign up for the basic account.

Valerie Heffner is a Marine Corps veteran and member of American Legion Post 27 in Arizona. askvalerie@legion.org

VERBATIM

“Everybody is just in shock right now.”



U.S. Rep. Lynn Westmoreland, R-Ga., on the primary loss of House GOP leader Eric Cantor. The seven-term Virginia congressman was defeated by David Brat, an economics professor and political unknown who accused Cantor of supporting amnesty for illegal immigrants.

Source: Fox News



LEGION BASEBALL

Legion World Series final live on ESPNU

The American Legion and the Shelby, N.C., Baseball World Series Committee have inked a five-year contract that will expand the viewership of the American Legion World Series (ALWS) to nearly 80 million people.

Starting with the 2014 ALWS this month, the championship game will be televised live by ESPNU. All games leading up to the championship will still be streamed live on ESPN3.com, viewable on PCs, Macs and mobile devices free of charge.

A pre-tournament concert lineup includes performances by country music artist Rodney Atkins, singer-songwriter Corey Smith and the Charlie Daniels Band.

See the full schedule of events online:

www.legion.org/baseball

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How to submit a reunion

The American Legion Magazine publishes reunion notices for veterans. Send notices to **The American Legion Magazine, Attn: Reunions, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206**, fax (317) 630-1280, e-mail reunions@legion.org or submit information via our website, www.legion.org/reunions.

Include the branch of service and complete name of the group, no abbreviations, with your request. The listing also should include the reunion dates and city, along with a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. Listings are publicized free of charge.

Your notice will appear on our Web site within a week and will remain available online until the final day of your reunion. Upon submission, please allow three months for your reunion to be published in print. **Due to the large number of reunions, The American Legion Magazine will publish a group's listing only once a year.**

Notices should be sent at least six months prior to the reunion to ensure timely publication.

Other notices

"In Search Of" is a means of getting in touch with people from your unit to plan a reunion. **We do not publish listings that seek people for interviews, research purposes, military photos or help in filing a VA claim.** Listings must include the name of the unit from which you seek people, the time period and the location, as well as a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. Send notices to **The American Legion Magazine, Attn: "In Search Of," P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206**, fax (317) 630-1280 or e-mail reunions@legion.org.

The magazine will not publish names of individuals, only the name of the unit. Listings are published free of charge.

Life Membership notices are published for Legionnaires who have been awarded life

memberships by their posts. **This does not include a member's own Paid-Up-For-Life membership.** Notices must be submitted on official forms, which may be obtained by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to **The American Legion Magazine, Attn: Life Memberships, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.**

"Comrades in Distress" listings must be approved by the Legion's Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation division. If you are seeking to verify an injury received during service, contact your Legion department service officer for information on how to publish a notice.

To respond to a "Comrades in Distress" listing, send a letter to **The American Legion Magazine, Attn: Comrades in Distress, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.** Include the listing's CID number in your response.

"Taps" notices are published only for Legionnaires who served as department commanders or national officers.

AIR FORCE / ARMY AIR FORCES

5th Bomb Group (H) Assn (WWII), San Antonio, 9/17-21, Richard O'Brien, (636) 287-3813, barbrich79@aol.com; **6th Bomb Grp Assn (Tinian, 1944-1945)**, Baltimore, 9/25-28, Gleda Richards, (951) 233-4516, grp41797@msn.com; **11th Bomb Group (H)**, Rapid City, SD, 10/1-5, Neal Siebenbruner, (507) 625-3240, nes@hickorytech.net; **20th Heli Sqdn (Vietnam & Thailand, All Yrs)**, Wichita, TX, 10/16-19, Karl Nelson, (651) 380-4090, knelson1945@mediacombb.net; **49th FIS (49th FSA)**, Dayton, OH, 9/11-14, John Jannazo, (850) 974-4459, john.jannazo@cubic.com; **78th Air/Sec Police Sqdn (Hamilton AFB, CA, 1960-1973)**, Gettysburg, PA, 9/22-27, Don Dalquest, (785) 748-0650, doke1418@live.com; **93rd Bomb Grp (H)(VH)M (1942-1952), WWII & Castle AFB, 389th BG, 44th BG, B-24 Grps, Wright-Patterson AFB, OH, 10/16-20, Jim Guddal, (866) 694-9058, jguddal@yahoo.com; 379th Bomb Grp WWII Assn**, Nashville, TN, 9/3-7, Mike Hart, (469) 633-0689, mike@379thbga.org; **384th Bomb Grp 8th AF (WWII)**, Dayton, OH, 10/16-18, Frank Alfter, (937) 306-2142, fjalfter@gmail.com

434th TFW, SOS, TFW, ARW (Bakalar AFB & Grissom AFB/ARB, IN), Columbus, IN, 8/15-16, Larry Alexander, (812) 372-5643, lwalex88@sbcglobal.net; **445th FIS**, San Antonio, 10/28-31, Larry Flinn, (210) 695-1944, lawrenceflinn@me.com; **501st Tact Cntl Grp Assn & Mbr Sqdns (Germany)**, Gatlinburg, TN, 9/22-25, Ron Anderson, (701) 293-5473, halron117@aol.com; **630th Eng LE Co**, Branson, MO, 9/7-9, Gerald Clemmons, (256) 757-2090; **712th TROB**, Nashville, TN, 8/30-9/1, Jim Werner, (812) 550-3138, 712trob@gmail.com; **4477th Test & Eval Sqdn**, Las Vegas, 10/17-19, Ben Galloway, (719) 683-8945, bgalloway5@elpasotel.net; **AF Postal and Courier Assn**, New Orleans, 9/16-19, Ernie Smith, (904) 824-3759, esmith-6@comcast.net; **Air Weather Recon Assn**, Biloxi, MS, 9/17-21, Bernie Barris, (210) 696-5072, bbarris@aol.com; **Distinguished Flying Cross**, Clearwater Beach/St. Petersburg, FL, 9/21-25, John Appel, johneappel@yahoo.com; **Pilot Tng Class 67C (Reese AFB, TX)**, Colorado Springs, CO, 10/2-5, Lee Mazzarella, (719) 660-8885, leetamaxzz@gmail.com; **Sampson AFB (3650th MTW)**, Herndon, VA, 10/2-5, Walt Steesy, (607) 532-4204, samafvvet@aol.com

ARMY

8th Armd Div, Bensalem, PA, 9/12-14, Andy Waskie, (215) 423-3930, 8tharmoreddivision@gmail.com; **12th MP Co (Guard) (Fort Riley, KS)**, Kansas City, MO, 9/12-14, Alan Schwantz, (507) 876-2253, alschwantz@hotmail.com; **13th Armd Div "Black Cats" (WWII)**, Columbus/Fort Benning, GA, 9/10-14, Jo Ellen Bender, (630) 355-5332, jebender1520@aol.com; **30th FA Bn**, Urbana, IA, 9/11-13, Charles Ries, (319) 436-2079; **34th Eng Bn**, San Diego, 9/17-21, Brian Hamor, (207) 244-1151, npcr@aol.com; **39th Cbt Eng**, Nashville, TN, 9/26-30, Bill Ray,

(817) 239-0787, bill39@sbcglobal.net; **92nd Inf Div (Buffalos)**, Silver Spring, MD, 10/17-19, Michael Moore, (856) 784-4092, sptgpeagle@aol.com; **167th Sig Co (RR)**, Gettysburg, PA, 10/16-19, Charles Widener, (309) 547-2579, catwide@sbcglobal.net; **205th Support Bn 203th Inf**, Coon Rapids, MN, 9/21-21, Jerry Charles, (763) 234-1376, chrjsjerr@msn.com; **281st Assault Heli Co**, Branson, MO, 9/25-28, Don Torrini, (618) 920-3810, donaldo12@aol.com; **300th Eng Cbt Bn (WWII)**, Tyler, TX, 10/3-5, Brad Peters, (413) 422-2577, petersross@crocker.com; **461st Ord Ammo Co (Korea, 1950-1952)**, Richfield, MN, 10/4, Dick Anderson, (989) 466-4474, reabaa@outlook.com; **630th Eng Co (LE) (Vietnam)**, Branson, MO, 9/18-20, Cecil Brown, (731) 415-6460, ceclbrown@charter.net; **999th Armd FA Bn (Korea, 1950-1954)**, Branson, MO, 9/25-28, John Eichler, (704) 542-2644, eeichler5480@att.net; **Army Med Cmd Japan Assn**, Las Vegas, 9/8-11, Charles W.S. Jezycki, (707) 257-6818, charleswsj@msn.com; **Army Sec Agency Korea**, Frankenthuth, MI, 9/15-18, Bob Rudolph, (269) 789-2860; **Bravo Co 4th Bn 31st Inf Rgt 196th Light Inf Bde Americal Div (Vietnam)**, Dunedin, FL, 10/2-5, Don Schroyer, (727) 644-0912, deschroyer@yahoo.com; **E Co Mortar Plt 1st Bn 6th Inf 198th Light Inf Americal Div (Vietnam, Oct 1967-Sept 1968)**, Chicago, 9/19-20, Ted Fowler, (605) 229-4757, carol222@abe.midco.net; **MAAG Vietnam**, Nashville, TN, 10/23-26, Wayne McCaughey, (540) 450-8526, wmmccaughey@verizon.net; **O Co 75th Ranger Rgt (Vietnam & Arctic Rangers Alaska)**, Greensboro, NC, 9/26-28, Larry Lee, (812) 972-1396; **Vung Rho Mtn Sig Complex & 261st Sig Co**, San Antonio, 9/29-10/3, George Fairfax, (660) 826-3670, gfairfax@charter.net

COAST GUARD

Duane WHEC 33, Hyannis, MA, 10/15-19, Stan Barnes, (603) 496-2679, sbarnes49@yahoo.com; **Western Great Lakes**, Manitowoc, WI, 9/20-21, Jeff Lindstrom, (708) 214-0200, wglcgreunion@gmail.com; **Woodbine**, Grand Haven, MI, 7/30-8/2, John Krueger, (616) 735-0085, jkrueger20@comcast.net

JOINT

F4 Phantom Society, Tyndall AFB, Panama City, FL, 10/20-23, Bill Crean, (856) 461-6637, williamcrean@comcast.net

MARINES

2nd Topographic Co, Beaufort, SC, 10/26-29, James Martin, (781) 572-7924, topotrooper@aol.com; **6th Mar Div Assn**, Quantico, VA, 10/7-12, Sharon Woodhouse, (503) 642-2429, sjwoodhouse@gmail.com; **A-1-11 Alpha North (1965-1966)**, Las Vegas, 10/12-15, Gordon Hansen, (928) 757-4882, ghansen@citlink.net

NAVY

Agerholm DD 826, Baton Rouge, LA, 9/25-28, Royce Attaway, (765) 766-5109, attaway826@gmail.com; **Arlington AGMR 2**, Las Vegas, 10/13-16, Michael Ferderer, (952) 935-8162, mferderer@comcast.net; **Casimir Pulaski SSBN 633**, Charleston, SC, 10/9-12, Bill Roup, (718) 991-8592, sechf2@aol.com; **Chewaucan AOG 50**, Virginia Beach, VA, 10/15-19, John (Ole) Olsen, (630) 323-1696, jlolsen1@comcast.net; **Cimarron AO 22**, Newport News, VA, 9/25-28, Ed Linhart, (402) 896-8749, edcimoa22@gmail.com; **Enterprise CVAN/CVN 65**, Waterloo, IA, 9/24-28, Mike Butler, (319) 277-1779, mike.butler052@gmail.com; **Epping Forest MCS 7**, Portland, OR, 9/11, Bill Franklin, (360) 673-5943, mefranklin@kalama.com; **Everett F. Larson DD/DDR 830**, San Francisco, 9/18-22, Clyde Bingham, (408) 667-1271, dbingham2@sbcglobal.net; **Finch DER 328**, Reno, NV, 10/5-8, Bob Piazza, (707) 337-9700, rwpiazza@comcast.net

Forrestal CVA/CVAVT 59, Branson, MO, 9/23-27, Jim Brussell, (935) 295-2863, cva59@roadrunner.com; **Fort Snelling LSD 30**, Nashville, TN, 9/17-21, Ray Batiato, (540) 239-0159, batman@swwa.net; **Frontier AD 25**, Portland, ME, 9/15-18, Robert Smith, (732) 251-1773, ussfrontierad25@yahoo.com; **Genesee AOG 8**, Providence, RI, 9/18-21, Howard Walker, (401) 539-6767, hewlaw1@verizon.net; **Gyatt DD 712/DDG 1**, Dallas, 9/15-19, Fred Barata, (304) 599-0917, dd712ddg1@comcast.net; **Halibut SSGN/SSN 587**, Branson, MO, 10/5-9, Paul King, (863) 439-2910, paulking@tampabay.rr.com; **Haynsworth DD 700**, Baton Rouge, LA, 10/2-5, James Horn, (717) 263-8090, haynsworth@comcast.net; **Houston CL 81**, Norfolk, VA, 10/20-25, Donna Rogers, (717) 792-9113, dlr7110@yahoo.com; **Huse DE 145**, Myrtle Beach, FL, 9/28-10/1, David Perlstein, (561) 368-7167, ussuse@gmail.com; **Ingersoll DD 652/990**, Houston, 9/5-7, Dennis Harris, (979) 676-0612, oldsailor62@gmail.com

Kaskaskia AO 27, Charlotte, NC, 9/24-28, Ed Scheid, (302) 834-7050, teazbone@aol.com; **Keppler DD/DDE 765**, Charleston, SC, 9/29-10/5, Steve Mooney, (732) 284-0134, keppler765@hotmail.com; **L.Y. Spear AS 36**, Chicago, 9/3-7, Patty Kelso, (913) 677-1837, pattykelso@usslyspear.org; **Lake Champlain CV 39**, Plattsburg, NY, Ray Cote, (917) 836-3687, raycote1@gmail.com; **Long Beach CGN 9**, St. Louis, 9/8-14, Don Shade, (716) 569-2914, lbcgn9@aol.com; **Mahan DD 364/DLG 11/DDG 46/DDG 72**, Baton Rouge, LA, 10/1-5, Gary White, (713) 501-7823, gankintx@comcast.com; **McMorris DE 1036**, Long Beach, CA, 10/16-19, Ken Castille, (678) 583-5491, castille_k@bellsouth.net; **Morris DD 417**, Las Vegas, 10/1-5, Sue Dail Pittman, (561) 319-3701, epit637350@aol.com; **Navarra APA 215**, Tucson, AZ, 10/20-24, Gerald Baker, (928) 754-3301, doughboy@npgcable.com; **New York BB 34**, Washington, 9/18-21, Brian Colona, (713) 858-8835, bccc@vitool.com; **Newport LST 1179**, Las Vegas, 10/5-12, Ray Batiato, (540) 239-0159, batman@swwa.net

NMCB 8, Charleston, SC, 10/13-16, Ron Dougal Sr., (480) 807-3016; **Oak Hill LSD 7**, Memphis, TN, 9/18-21, Raylah Holm, (509) 607-9021, raylah@aol.com; **Plymouth Rock LSD 29**, Norfolk, VA, 9/25-28, Bill Hayne, (864) 934-2900, whhawnie@charter.net; **Randolph CV/CVA/CVS 15**, Newport News, VA, 9/21-28, Earl Cline, (352) 666-4519, earlcline@yahoo.com; **Ray SS 271/SSN 653**, Charleston, SC, 11/8-11, Tony Williams, (256) 503-5374, tonytwilliams57@aol.com; **Robert H. McCard DD 822**, Branson, MO, 10/22-26, John Childs, (843) 670-6811, johnmchilds6909@gmail.com; **Sampson DDG 10**, St. Pete Beach, FL, 4/30-5/3, Dave Brandt, (803) 478-2617, drbrandt@ftc-i.net; **Sea Cat SS 399**, Branson, MO, 9/22-27, Lynn Trump, (937) 548-6116, trumplynn@gmail.com; **Sea Fox SS 402**, Galveston, TX, 5/4-9, Robert Caskey, (281) 324-4757, robert.e.caskey@nctv.com; **Soubarissen AO 93**, Nashville, TN, 10/13-16, Tammy Beene, (615) 900-1230, tammy@bestofnashvilletours.com

Thetis Bay CVE 90, CVHA 1 & LPH 6, Seattle, 9/3-7, Kenneth Enck, (308) 382-9365, gigrapa@yahoo.com; **Thomas Jefferson SSBN 618**, Charleston, SC, 9/21-24, Ron Bekech, (239) 437-4999, bekech@comcast.net; **Tin Can Sailors National Reunion**, Charleston, SC, 8/17-21, Terry Miller, (800) 223-5535, monica@destroyers.org; **Truckee AO 147**, Seattle, 9/18-21, Mike Landers, (770) 356-1727, mlanders52@yahoo.com; **Tutuila ARG 4**, Myrtle Beach, SC, 9/3-6, Charlie Estelle, (201) 262-0753, boxcar_charlie@verizon.net; **VP Officers**, San Diego, 11/7-9, Rick Erazo, (619) 465-4225, admin@vpreunion.com; **VP-16**, San Antonio, 10/1-5, Bill Sherman, (772) 708-3173, vp16reunion@yahoo.com; **VR-21**, St. Augustine Beach, FL, 10/20-23, Gale Downs, (904) 707-5568, gadcpa@comcast.net; **VW-1 All Hands Alumni Assn**, Williamsburg, VA, 9/22-26, Ralph Link, (309) 532-9160, aewron1fe@gmail.com; **West Virginia BB 48**, San Antonio, 9/25-28, Mike Mullins, (610) 952-3542, reunion2014@usswestvirginia.org

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19th Air Refueling Sqdn Radar & Radio Shop Personnel (Otis AFB, 1972-1975), John Sheridan, 352 County Road 75, Mechanicsville, NY 12118

24th Inf 34th Rgt D Co (Korea, June 1950), Roy Lee Cline, (817) 573-8650, kitaroy@yahoo.com

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93rd REMS (Castle AFB, CA, 1959-1962), Joseph Halado, (773) 592-6017, hondo711@yahoo.com

98th Supply Serv Bn 58th Field Depot (Qui Nhon, Vietnam, May 1968-Dec 1969), Pedro Caro, pedrincaro@hotmail.com

439th Mech Inf 8th Inf Div (Baumholder, Germany, Sept 1977-Sept 1980), Arthur Fryer, (352) 503-2569

Bravo Co 122nd Ord Bn 3rd Armd Div (Gelnhausen, Germany, July 1959-July 1963), Gary Raisio, (303) 475-0929, garyraisio@gmail.com

Co 842 (NTC Great Lakes, June-Aug 1945), Howard Kling, (513) 825-6592, hkling@cincirr.com

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NRTC San Diego & Camp Elliot Co 238 (1951-1952), William Finlay, (928) 680-7422

Sampson NTB (Oct-Dec 1943), Larry Ricciuto, (732) 244-2319, claire4944@aol.com

TACRON 1 (Coronado, CA, 1973-1976), Reuel Miller, (707) 874-1951, reuelmiller@comcast.net

TAPS

Bruce L. Plumb, Dept. of Oregon. Nat'l Contests Supervisory Cmte. Memb. 1965-1976 and 1980-1982, and Nat'l Contests Supervisory Cmte. Chmn. 1977-1979.

Conrad L. Roberson, Dept. of Texas. Dept. Cmdr. 2001-2002, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Alt. Memb. 2004-2008, Nat'l Americanism Cncl. Vice Chmn. 2003-2008, Nat'l Distinguished Guests Cmte. Vice Chmn. 1984-1989, 1990-2000, 2001-2003 and 2011-2013, Nat'l Distinguished Guests Cmte. Chmn. 2000-2001, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Memb. 2008-2011, Nat'l Legis. Cmsn. Liaison Cmte. Memb. 2008-2011 and Nat'l Sec. Cncl. Memb. 2013-2014.

David A. Roche Jr., Dept. of Indiana. Nat'l Distinguished Guests Cmte. Vice Chmn. 2005-2007, Nat'l Foreign Relations Cncl. Vice Chmn. 2012-2013 and Nat'l Veterans Affairs & Rehab. Cncl. Memb. 2013-2014.

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Horse sense is just stable thinking.

IN A WINDOW of a house on a suburban street appeared a sign: "Piano for sale." A few hours later, a sign appeared in a window of the house next door: "Yay!"

A YOUNG BOY told his father, "Today is Abraham Lincoln's birthday. He was great, wasn't he?"

"Indeed he was," his father replied. "When he was your age he was out splitting rails."

"Yep. And when he was your age, he was president of the United States!"

A MAN charged with murder bribed a friend on the jury to hold out for a manslaughter verdict. The jury was out for a long time, but at last brought in the desired result.

During a visit in prison the next week, the man thanked his friend. "You must've had a tough time getting them to vote for manslaughter," he said.

"Tough is right," the friend replied. "The other 11 wanted to acquit you."

THE UNITED STATES has more golf courses per mile than any other country in the world.

THE ENGLISH TEACHER asked her class, "When does a book become a classic?"

One student replied, "When people who haven't read it begin to say they have."

I HAD AN HOURGLASS FIGURE. Unfortunately, the sands shifted.



"Do it, don't do it. We don't care anymore."



"We decided to recall our new drug because a common side effect is lawsuits."



"Good grief! Our house is so smart it just refinanced itself."

A MAN bought a parrot at an auction, but only after some spirited bidding.

"I suppose the bird talks," he remarked to the auctioneer.

"Talks?" the auctioneer replied. "He's been bidding against you for the last half hour."

THE FIVE DAYS after the weekend are always the most difficult.

THE CHEAPEST WAY to trace your family tree is to run for public office.

EVER HEAR about the short fortuneteller who escaped from jail? She was a small medium at large.

ONE NICE THING about narcissists is that they don't talk about other people.

"THE SUPREME COURT has ruled that city council meetings may open with a prayer. Especially if the city in question is Detroit." – Conan O'Brien



ACTOS® AND DIABETES PATIENTS



ACTOS®, also known as pioglitazone, is a medication prescribed for Type II Diabetes, manufactured by the Japanese company Takeda Pharmaceutical Company. Takeda began a 10-year epidemiological study to determine the safety of Actos®. During the five-year interim analysis of the study in **August 2011**, the results found that there was a **40% increased risk of bladder cancer**.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued a warning to all physicians prescribing Actos®. The FDA is also aware of a recent epidemiological study conducted in France, which suggests an increased risk of bladder cancer with pioglitazone. Based on the results of this study, France has suspended the use of pioglitazone and Germany has recommended not to start pioglitazone in new patients.

If you, a family member, or a loved one has bladder cancer and has ACTOS®, you may be entitled to compensation. Please **contact the Branch Law Firm**, a well-known national law firm that has been in business over 45 years, for a **free initial interview** and **consultation**.

We have learned from a series of investigations that GranuFlo, an alkaline substance given to dialysis patients to neutralize the acid that builds up in the blood, can increase serious health risks associated with dialysis.

GranuFlo Recall

In June 2012, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued a Class I recall of GranuFlo Dry Acid Concentrate and Naturalyte Liquid, a dialysis product used in the treatment of acute and chronic renal (kidney) failure during hemodialysis. **Class I recalls are used for dangerous or defective products that may cause serious health problems or even death.**

GranuFlo, manufactured by Fresenius Medical Care, has been found to contain far more acetate than rival products, resulting in elevated bicarbonate levels – a significant risk factor for cardiac arrest in dialysis patients.

If you or a loved one has experienced a cardiac event, stroke, or death following the use of GranuFlo, then you may be entitled to compensation. The Branch Law Firm, a nationally known law firm, is handling these types of cases and specifically representing clients on a national basis regarding GranuFlo. Call for a confidential interview, **1-800-828-4529** or **1-800-243-3545** and visit our website at **www.branchlawfirm.com**.

Turner W. Branch, a principal and senior partner of the Branch Law Firm, retired as a 1st Lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps in 1968. He served on active duty in Camp Pendleton, California and at the Marine Corps Air Facility (MCAF) in Santa Ana, California. While at Camp Pendleton he served with the Second Battalion, Fifth Marines, First Marine Division (FMF) USMC.

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